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NEW LOOK

January 2015
DHS15 | QR15

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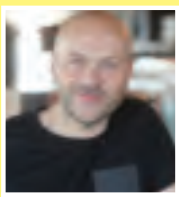
Celeb chefs inside:



Richard Sandoval



Anissa Helou



Simon Rimmer

Wellness retreats

Where you should be checking in for a body & soul reboot

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Book your seats now!
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#bbcgfawards2014

Welcome!



It's true, January 1 dawns looking exactly the same as the day before. But it is human nature to need calendars, and years, to help mark the passage of time, and beginnings and ends. And so it is that this is the month we all decide to start afresh and try new things.

Inevitably, the focus shifts to wellbeing, with many of us deciding to make the start of a new year the ideal time to start off on a new health or fitness regime.

As you probably know, here at *BBC Good Food ME*, we believe in balance above all else – so, eating well, exercising, and maintaining a wholesome lifestyle that you can sustain, is far more effective than fad diets or instant solutions, we think. That's why we bring you our fabulous, nutritionist-verified nine-day plan (*Your healthy eating plan*, p30) complete with new breakfast, lunch and supper ideas that are not only light and nutritious, but absolutely delicious too – you'll be tempted to try these dishes even if you don't go on the plan, I promise you! This plan is not designed for losing weight or inches specifically, but rather, making you feel good inside out, long-term. Combine it with moderate regular exercise, and weight loss and increased energy levels will come naturally.

Part of a balanced lifestyle means you don't need to deprive yourself, and that's why we've also put together a scrummy selection of desserts that won't pile on the pounds (*Lighter puddings*, p58). And if you really want to treat your body to a whole bunch of goodness, then try the custard bake, cupcake and brownie recipes on pages 62-63 (*Vegan & delicious*) – you'll never guess they're free from eggs, dairy and gluten, and you don't have to be on a diet to enjoy these.

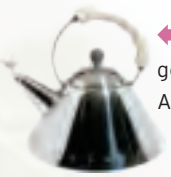
Hope you have a wonderful start to 2015, and make sure that it is as healthy as it is enjoyable! I look forward to sharing another delicious year with you,

Sudeshna

Editor's picks



I make these crêpes with buckwheat flour on weekends, and they turn out delicious! P30



You've gotta love Alessi's designs – this kettle is one of my lust-haves, p72



For a quick wellness getaway, you really can't do better than the rustic-chic Six Senses Zighy Bay resort, p78

BBC goodfood Middle East

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Meet our Editorial Panel

The exclusive group of experts who are part of the *BBC Good Food ME* family:



Uwe Micheel A veteran chef, Uwe has been cooking since he was 12, and in the interim 30 odd years, he has picked up numerous awards, and has been serving as President of the Emirates Culinary Guild since 1999. A member of several international chef's groups, he is one of the UAE's most respected culinary personalities.



Alison Van Camp Nutritionist Alison has been promoting a holistic approach to good health through diet for the past five years, not only to private clients but also in the capacity of a recipe and nutritional consultant for various leading corporate brands and hotels. The Netherlands-based nutritionist has developed her own nutrition analysis system based on USDA nutrient values.



Danielle Nierenberg President of Food Tank, a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization-supported non-profit body focused on sustainable agriculture and food systems, Danielle is a world-renowned expert on food issues, and a widely published and quoted personality. Qualified in Agriculture, Food, and Environment from Tufts University, New York-based Danielle aims to build a global network to promote safe, healthy eating.



Michael Kitts The Director of Culinary Arts at the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management has hung up his chef's whites, wearing which he had spent over 20 years working at various leading establishments in London and won numerous accolades, to turn mentor and teacher to young aspirants of the hospitality industry in the UAE's leading training centre.



Marta Yanci Founder of bespoke catering company Marta's Kitchen, and more recently, a boutique cafe in JLT, Marta's workshop, Marta is a self-taught chef who took her passion for good food and turned it into a career five years ago. Now a recognised face on the UAE culinary circuit, the former lawyer has appeared on TV in Dubai and her home country, Spain.

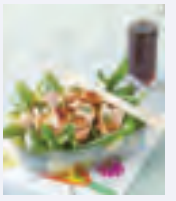


Andy Campbell A Scottish celebrity chef who now calls Dubai home, Andy has trained at Westminster College, and previously worked at various restaurants, including Michelin-starred ones, and also ran his own restaurant in London, before moving here to work as a private chef for exclusive events. He currently also consults with Arabian Health Care in Ras al Khaimah.

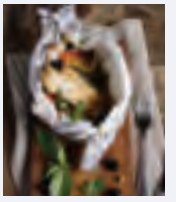
Menu planner

Whip up a delicious meal with recipes from this issue

Saturday lunch with the girls



Starter
This flaked salmon salad is healthy and low-cal! p38



Main course
The Chicken baked in a bag can be made ahead, p25



Dessert
You'll be handing out the recipes for this vegan cherry and almond brownies! p63

Behind the scenes

Take a look at what the ***BBC Good Food ME*** team members got up to this month!



Senior editor Sudeshna Ghosh was excited to check out Dubai's first food truck!

Assistant editor Nicola Monteath went on a seafood binge this month!

Marketing manager Marizel Salvador caught up with friends of BBC Good Food ME at last month's Dubai Christmas Festival

Your say

We love to hear from you!

MAKING THE MOST OF WINTER



This month's issue is filled with so many great recipes that are easy, quick and simple – great for me, especially since it's the festive season. Staying in Dubai, we hardly get the chance to go out for a picnic, because of the weather. But now that its winter, the magazine has given me a lot of ideas and simple tips for planning picnics without a big hassle – I'm surprised no other magazine covers this. I aspire to become a pro chef and all your tried-and-tested recipes are a life saver. I have been reading this magazine for a while now and I really appreciate the time and energy you put into each article, since it really helps people like me who like to know more about different food and cuisines. Way to go, *BBC Good Food ME* magazine!

Sana Chowdhary

HOSTESS WITH THE MOSTEST



There is a reason why food is an important element of any festival – it brings people together. As a food magazine, *BBC Good Food ME* does wonders for my culinary skills. But what floored me in your December issue was the feature that helped the hostess in me to blossom as well! (*Deck the halls, Set the table...*) gave me beautiful insights into arranging my home in tune with the festive occasion, without being harsh on my wallet. The top tips will make sure that aesthetics and colour combinations will finally find a way to my table! And as for the food, the cover page beauty 'Chocolate, orange and cranberry red velvet bombe' (*Star bakes*, December 2014) will feature as my centerpiece for sure! Let me add a line of appreciation for the invaluable advice on super foods (*Winter-proof your diet*) that will help build my family's immune system this winter. Overall, a keeper of an issue!

Neenu Sajin

EMIRATI EVENT



I went along to The Dubai World Hospitality Championship which was a huge success, and the event was covered in the December issue of *BBC Good Food ME* as well! I highly recommend visiting the next edition, as you can watch the best cooking demonstrations, activities and the competitions between amateur and professional chefs. You can also try authentic Emirati cooking.

Dounia Taha

Win!

The winner of the Star Letter gets a **DHS1,000 SHOPPING VOUCHER FROM TAVOLA**, the leading retailer of European products and essential items for the kitchen. Tavola is a one-stop shop for bake ware, tableware, high quality cookware and premium brands such as Mauviel, Le Creuset, and Zwilling kitchen knives. They have stores in the UAE and Qatar, as well as across the GCC.



Star Letter

BAKING BEAUTIES

As a keen cook, I always looked forward to the recipes from *BBC Good Food ME* magazine, and was quite delighted to see the Chocolate orange and cranberry red velvet bombe (*Star bakes*, December 2014). I tried recreating it in square tins, as I didn't have the hemisphere cake tins, and baked it for my daughter's class Christmas party. I was so pleased when both teachers and students enjoyed it immensely. I will definitely be serving this cake again on Christmas day and at future birthday parties.



Ever since my subscription this year with the magazine, I tried out nearly five cakes and the results have been amazing and always highly complimented. The instructions of all your recipes are made so easy to follow. Best wishes to the *BBC Good Food ME* team!

Ruth Cardoz

From our social media pages

- Received my copy today, am going to spend my full evening reading it. I am always very happy the day I receive it, it gives me new ideas and I come to know the opening of new restaurants. Thank you BBC Good Food ME! – *Ralph Joudet*
- The cover looks yum…Can't wait to try some recipes - *Kashiana Williams*
- Enjoying the latest BBC Good Food ME Christmas edition with a big hot cup of organic cacao drink. You will fall in love with the recipes in this edition! - *BiOrganic Store*

TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts and comments, and send us your photos with your copy of BBC Good Food ME!

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on:

@bbcgoodfoodme

@bbcgoodfoodmiddleeast

Or, you could write to us at:
The Editor, BBC Good Food Middle East.
Grosvenor Business Tower, Tecom, Office 804
PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.

Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SUPPLIED, SHUTTERSTOCK

BBC goodfood Middle East

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January 2015

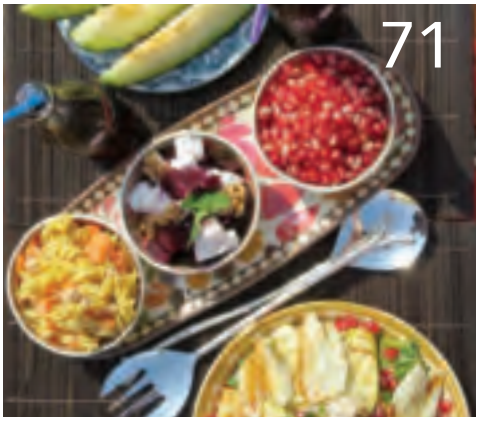


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Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians
You can freeze it
Not suitable for freezing
Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make
A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry
More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks
Low fat 12g or less per portion
Low cal 500 calories or less per main.
Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.
Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.
Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids
1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving
Vit C Iron Omega-3 Calcium Folate Fibre
Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients
GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:
P Contains pork
Contains alcohol

Store Directory

Contact numbers for outlets featured in this issue

Crate and Barrel: 04-3990125
Daiso: 04-4503739
Harvest Home: 07-2438782
Indigo Living: 04-3466934
Nespresso: 04-3928181
Tavola: 04-3402933

Note: Prices in Qatari Riyals are approximately the same as UAE Dirhams.

Foodie file

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.


Zengo


Sea fu

DINE IN THE CITY

FOUR FAB NEW RESTAURANTS TO CHECK OUT

✳ The Venetian Village at the Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi, Grand Canal, is now home to Brasserie Flo Abu Dhabi, a classic French restaurant, with outlets across Europe and China. Alsatian celebrity chef Jean Paul Bucher is at the helm of this restaurant which serves classics like onion soup, beef bourguignon, profiteroles and crepes suzette. Call 02-4041931.

✳ Sea fu, at the newly opened Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach, is a gorgeous seafood restaurant which boasts a spacious outdoor terrace and bar with views of the Gulf. Mediterranean-and Asian-influenced dishes like blue prawn tartare with ponzu vinaigrette, Atlantic blue lobster with a moreish lemon butter, spicy sate sauce and kale, and coriander and beetroot mousse with wasabi foam are just some of the innovative gourmet offerings to savour. Call 04-2707777.

We Love!

✳ Zengo, the newly opened Asian outlet at Le Royal Meridien Beach Resort and Spa, by celebrity chefs Richard Sandoval in partnership with Singaporean chef Akmal Anuar, is the place to be seen at this month. Indulge in sharing-style dishes like Kanpachi ceviche, jumbo quail with adobo teriyaki from the Robata grill, 30 Vegetable chop suey, and roasted Chilean seabass or Wagyu ribs. Call 04-3165550.



This just in:

The Philips Kitchen Machine is just what you need if you're going to cook more in 2015. It allows you to blend, chop, knead, whisk and mix – the perfect all-in-one gadget – and has a planetary mixing action function which moves backwards and forwards to reach all corners. Dhs1,399 at all leading stores.

$8.4 billion

the amount of money the UAE is most likely to spend on food imports by 2020, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit

Local celebrations

The National Day celebrations last month took on a heartfelt hue when a group of local women in Umm Suqueim decided on an open event celebrating Emirati cooking. With the support of Majid Al Marri, Director of Hotel Classification, Dubai Tourism and Commerce Management, an evening of local cooking and handiwork displays, traditional dancing and more was organised in Safa Park on the Thursday before National Day. With free distribution of local foods, a semi-ceremonial cutting of a cake in the design of the UAE flag, and with children running and playing throughout the park, the local community came together, and *BBC Good Food ME* was privileged to have been invited. For many of the older women cooking in public, this represented a major step for them outside their very private community but everyone, Emirati or expat, was welcomed and involved.



Compiled by nicola monteath | Photograps SUPPLIED, SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

#What's trending



#healthyfood
The hashtag has been all the rage on Twitter, with supermarkets and health food fanatics posting recipes and images of healthy food to indulge in. Recipe suggestions include sweet potato salad with roasted garlic and lime dressing, as well as vegan cheese, and tips on how to include kale in your diet.

Home

Keep it RAW!

Want to make nut milks and dehydrated food, but not sure where to find the equipment? Raw Bites is your one-stop-shop online, for everything you need to make raw, vegan food, with items like nut milk bags, sprouting jars, dehydrators and superfoods on sale. The website has a selection of recipes (nut milks, desserts, soups, appetisers, and smoothies or juices), as well as a guide to everything vegan in Dubai, whether it's restaurants, markets, or cleaning products. Visit raw-bites.ae.

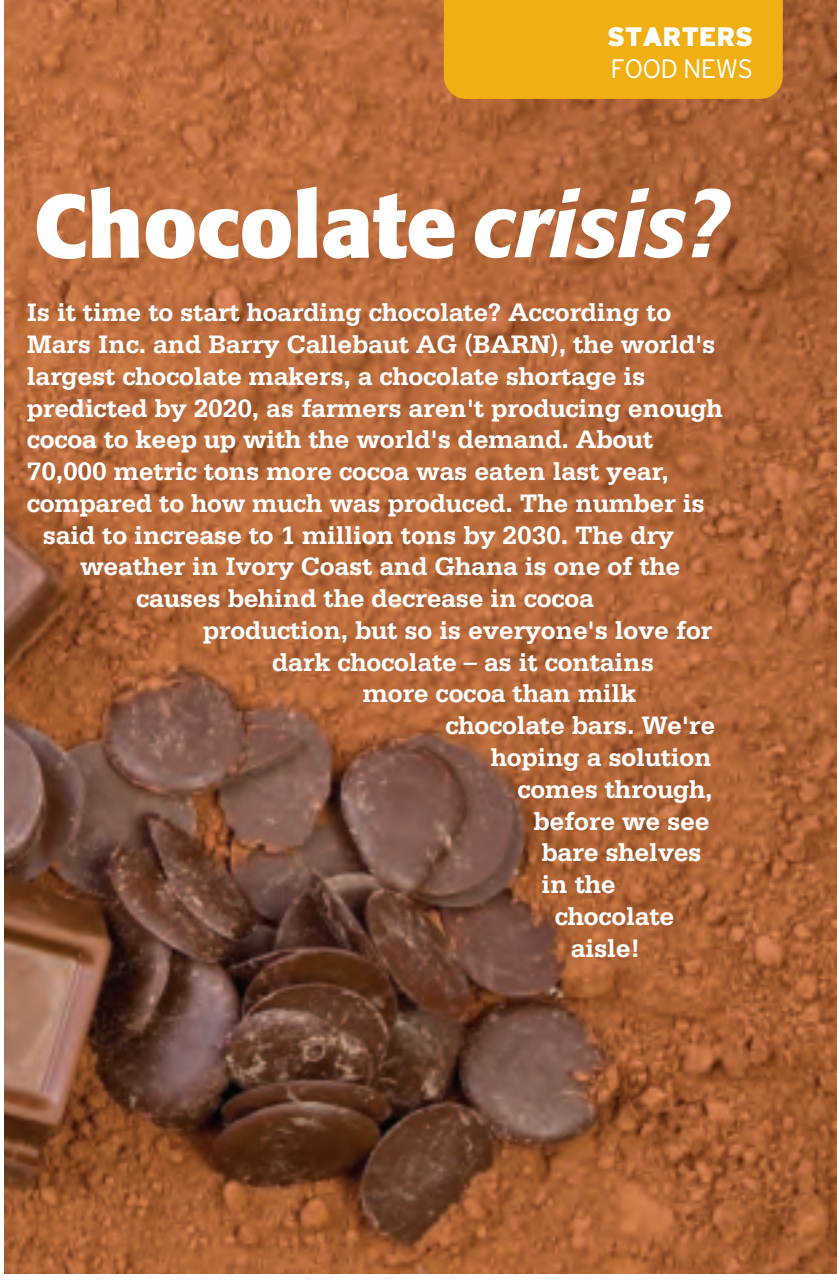


Food truck revolution!

We couldn't be happier that the food truck trend has finally hit the UAE. Salt at Kite Beach was one of the first on the scene, and pictures of the Cheetos chicken sliders flooding our Instagram feed, made it clear that we weren't the only ones waiting for the trucks! Jake's is the newest truck to stop by for gourmet bagel burgers, currently sited at Kite beach, while Meylas, which serves Emirati cuisine at pop-up locations, is the Abu Dhabi one to head to. We've heard a few more are going to hit the streets soon...

Chocolate *crisis?*

Is it time to start hoarding chocolate? According to Mars Inc. and Barry Callebaut AG (BARN), the world's largest chocolate makers, a chocolate shortage is predicted by 2020, as farmers aren't producing enough cocoa to keep up with the world's demand. About 70,000 metric tons more cocoa was eaten last year, compared to how much was produced. The number is said to increase to 1 million tons by 2030. The dry weather in Ivory Coast and Ghana is one of the causes behind the decrease in cocoa production, but so is everyone's love for dark chocolate – as it contains more cocoa than milk chocolate bars. We're hoping a solution comes through, before we see bare shelves in the chocolate aisle!



"Most seafood should be simply threatened with heat and then celebrated with joy."

– American chef and cookbook author Jeff Smith

Festival fun

it's that time of year again, when food fests seem to cram our calendars. One of our faves, the Dubai Food Carnival, is back this year from February 12-14, at a brand new location this year, the Dubai International Marine Club. We'll have all the details on the event in next month's issue, so stay tuned! www.dubaifoodcarnival.com.





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Aisle file

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, home décor and more.



Reader offer

Sweet stuff!

You'll love tucking into these **LES GALETS SWEETS**, made from all-natural ingredients. The pistachio and other nut-flavoured North African sweets come packaged in a gorgeous box, and as an introductory offer, just this month, all BBC Good Food ME readers get free shipping! Log on to **PATISSERIELESGALETS.COM** and use the promo code BBCGF2015, prices start from Dhs145 per box.



Serve soft-boiled eggs in these **VINTAGE EGGS HEN PAILS**, to add a nice touch to your brunch spread. Dhs50 for a set of four at **HARVEST HOME**.



Make your own mini pizza, anywhere you like, in just five minutes with this **KITCHEN EXPERT PIZZA ALFORNO** handmade clay oven. Plus, it doesn't emit smoke, so can be used indoor as well – we're already thinking of toppings to add! Dhs251 from **CITRUSSTV.COM**.



Want to make your home smell amazing all the time? This **PINK TAFFETA DIFFUSER** with a rose fragrance, will do the job! Dhs79 at Boux Avenue.



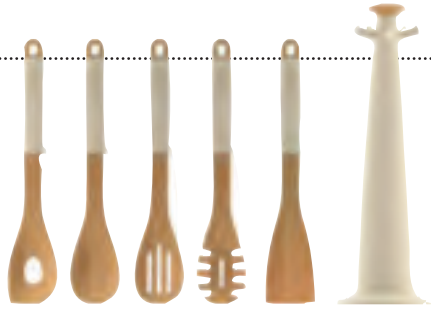
Make sure crumbs don't fall all over your nice flooring or carpet at your next party, by serving appetisers in these **COCKTAIL RECIPE PLATES**, Dhs119 at **CRATE AND BARREL**.



This stylish **WHITE MUG** with gold handle and rim will add glamour to your everyday cappuccino. Dhs89 at **INDIGO LIVING**.

If you want style on a budget, you'll love this cute **BLUE FLORAL** teapot that is super affordable too! Dhs20 at **DAISO**.





We love **JOSEPH JOSEPH** for their fun-meets-functional designs, and this **ELEVATE WOOD CREAM CAROUSEL SET** is no exception. With a rotating stand and five wooden spoons, this will become a firm fixture on your kitchen counter. Dhs285 at **TAVOLA.**

ON THE **STORE FRONT**



ETHAN ALLEN'S new two-level store on Sheikh Zayed Road – right across Times Square mall – is a fresh, brightly lit space, that gives off the feeling of walking into a beautifully decorated home. It has various looks and themes displayed across the store in room settings. Find everything from a nautical-themed living room to luxe couches, coffee tables, and wood dining tables. A great selection of accessories that will add instant glamour to any home, including gorgeous candle holders, leather and mirrored trays, funky bowls, plus beautiful art, and cushions are on offer too. Upstairs, you can customise your furniture and have a chat with the experts for furnishing ideas. Call 04-3414229.

Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photograps SUPPLIED

Here to help

All your culinary and décor questions answered.



Expert chef, Marta Yanci, founder of bespoke catering company Marta's Kitchen, addresses your cooking dilemmas.

Q What is the difference between waxed and unwaxed lemons? What are each good for when cooking, and how can I identify one from another in the supermarket?

A. The main difference is that waxed lemons last longer. A waxed lemon can have a shelf life of around three weeks, whereas an unwaxed one will stay fresh for about a week when refrigerated. It is best to use unwaxed lemons when a recipe calls for lemon zest, or if you want to add a slice of lemon to a drink. Waxed lemons are good for juicing. Both can be found in the UAE but there is no easy way to tell which is which – for instance, the fact that a lemon is less shiny doesn't necessarily mean it is unwaxed. The best way is to ask the staff!

Q When making sticky toffee pudding, how do you keep the cake moist inside?

A. I would suggest cooking it in a bain marie – that is placing the baking dish in a larger container with water, and cooking it between 160-180C, so that you can really control the doneness as it cooks. Also bear in mind that, as all puddings, it will continue cooking once it is out of the oven, so make sure you plan your baking time accordingly.

Q I tasted grilled avocado recently, and wanted to know if there's a special technique involved when making it?

A. You can grill avocado either in thick slices or in halves. It is important that the avocado is a little firmer than usual, especially if you are going to grill it in slices. Just sprinkle some lemon juice, salt and pepper and brush with a little bit of olive oil and grill for 2 minutes. If you grill the halves, stuff them with a nice tuna salad and you have a perfect packed lunch! The sliced version is ideal for sandwiches. Once grilled, keep it in the fridge and use within the next 24 hours.

Q My kids hate Brussels sprouts but I know they're good for you. How can I get them to eat more?

A. A great way is by combining the Brussels sprouts with dishes you already know your kids like. For instance, prepare spaghetti with cream, beef bacon and finely sliced Brussels sprouts, and then grill it in the oven with some cheese. Another great way is baking them in the oven with cranberries, and adding a sauce or marinade of honey, olive oil, orange zest and a pinch of cinnamon.





Marta's ingredient of the month

Endive is in season right now, and they are rich in vitamin K and folic acid, and low in calories. Enjoy it in salads, with blue cheese and walnuts, or anchovies. They also taste delicious when cooked! For a quick and healthy recipe, cut the endives into quarters, add some olive oil, 2-3 spoonfuls of good vegetable stock, salt, pepper and oregano. Cover with cling film and microwave for 5 minutes or until tender.

DESIGN Q&A

Interior design expert Pavitra Soans, founder of interior design firm Pure Coalesce, offers practical décor advice.



Q What are the latest décor trends for 2015?

A. When adopting a new trend it is always advisable to make practical choices. You should approach it in the same way as updating your wardrobe – the core elements remain, yet accessories can be included to make it current. I find that fashion and interior design are closely connected. Shades in blue and the blush pink family are the ones to try this year. Trend experts predict the colour for the year will be Guildford green – this colour is said to have a calming effect, and combines well with blue and blush as well. Another trend that will gain more popularity this year is the adaptation of industrial design in furniture, to create a raw unfinished look that evokes the feeling of a factory or warehouse; for example, professional lighting equipment like tripod stands, being used as a lamp in a living room.



Q I love fresh flowers but they are quite expensive. Any other ideas on how to brighten up my dining table?

A. Fruits and vegetables can add so much colour to a dining table. They are inexpensive and can be found in your own kitchen as well. Pine cones, cinnamon sticks and nutmeg, coupled with candles, create a rustic vibe, and also lend a natural, seasonal fragrance, perfect for cooler days.

Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SHUTTERSTOCK

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Thought for food

On test: Kitchen gadgets

We review some of the latest appliances on the market.

De'Longhi Multifry multicooker

Almost every household appliance brand worth its salt seems to be jumping on the air-frying technology bandwagon these days, and De'Longhi is no exception. Their product improves on other older versions, offering a complete cooking solution, using an exclusive SHS (Surrround Heating System) technology. There's also a free, user-friendly recipe app that can be downloaded to find new ideas for using the cooker.

What we liked: Not being regular users of deep-frying, we were quite skeptical about the specific advantages of having something like this. Deciding to test its core offering first, we had a go with homemade chips. The two-toned retro-style tabletop cooker is easy to get started on – simply toss in the potatoes, drizzle in a small amount of oil (a cute little mini measuring cup is provided, which helps calculate recommended amounts of oil), shut the lid, set the timer – which is a removable button-like attachment – and get it going. The results were, for us, game-changing however. The chips came out perfectly crisp, tasted delicious with some salt sprinkled over, and considering how little oil was used in their making, have converted us to enjoying homemade hand-cut chips almost every day! When cooking frozen chips (or anything else really) it doesn't require any oil at all. But this gadget does a lot more than chips. It can basically be used as a small oven – with heating elements on the top and bottom and fan – thereby effectively cooking anything from baked chicken and fish to stews. A clear lid helps keep an eye on what's cooking, while the in-built paddle, which helps distribute the heat to enable low-fat cooking, also doubles up as a stirrer, making this the perfect accessory for making dishes like risotto and couscous, that would normally require constant attention and stirring. We attempted a – rare for us – risotto with the cooker, and it turned out perfect; it's ideal for busy cooks who can do other things while the food cooks itself.

What we didn't like: This isn't exactly the most silent of machines, so we wouldn't recommend turning it on when you need peace and quiet.

To buy: From Dhs899, at leading supermarkets.



Nespresso Lattisima pro



What's a good cup of coffee without a little crema on top? While we love Nespresso's range of machines, this one is definitely our favourite as it comes with an in-build milk frother, has a sleek, chic look, and makes barista-style coffee with just the touch of a button.

What we liked: You can literally make coffee in a few seconds with this gadget. Fill milk into the milk jug that needs to be pushed into the system in the front, fill the water tank at the back, and place your favourite nespresso pod on top, to make an espresso, ristretto and lungo, or milk-based drinks like latte macchiato and cappuccino with equal ease. The spout from the milk jug pours steaming hot milk into your mug, before the coffee is poured out. All instructions are displayed on the screen on top of the machine, and needs no effort or help. Coming down to the taste test, our coffee was the kind we'd love to wake up to every morning – with just the right amount of foam on top. We're definitely swapping our French-press coffees for this.

What we didn't like: It's certainly not a cheap machine, but a great long-term investment if you do use it on a daily basis.

To buy: Dhs2,450 at Nespresso boutiques.

Tefal Clipso + Precision

This pressure cooker is a revolutionary gadget that can really enhance your cooking experience. The sleek design is very impressive, and it is surprisingly light, unlike most pressure cookers that are usually bulky and heavy.

What we liked: It is very easy to use and a good gadget to have for preparing wholesome and hearty family meals. The versatility and precision of this pressure cooker is great – it can be used for stewing, simmering and steaming. Equipped with two cooking programmes for vegetables and meat, this highly innovative product enabled us to steam vegetables to the right texture, and cook the beef to the tenderness we desired. For a first attempt, we made a Spanish-influenced Filipino dish called Puchero that turned out perfect! The safety feature, clever one-hand opening system – you need to use both hands for most cookers – and timer, which starts counting down once the right cooking temperature is reached, are all highly useful features too. It also comes with a recipe book that includes the appropriate cooking times so you need not worry about the time setting for your dishes. The thoughtful fold-down handles are a great help when it comes to storage.

To buy: Dhs849, at all leading electronic stores and supermarkets.

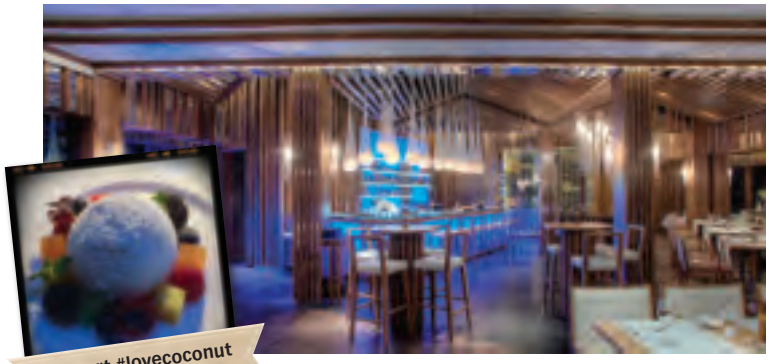


Reviews by SUDESHNA GHOSH, NICOLA MONTEATH AND ADELLE GERONIMO

Tried & tasted

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Seafood restaurants



Where: Pierchic, Madinat Jumeirah

What's it like: This restaurant has long enjoyed a special place in the hearts of Dubai residents, as one of the most romantic venues in the city. Recently reopened after a major makeover, Pierchic has renewed its claim to this recognition – with the Burj Al Arab twinkling nearby, the gentle ocean breeze flowing through the expansive windows, and picturesque setting, this really is one of Dubai's most atmospheric spots. Two new 'pods' or drinks lounges have opened in the pier that leads up to the over-water restaurant, offering a relaxed spot for drinks, with enviable views. Inside, the contemporary décor brings home the marine theme in glam style – think lit Swarovski crystals in fish nets.

For starters, I opted for the grilled Loch Fynn diver scallops, served over a delicate vanilla-scented tapioca pearl custard – the dish showcased the hero ingredient beautifully, but I would have liked a bit more textural interest in there. My friend's Cornish crab salad with asparagus, however, we both ended up almost fighting over, as it was packed with flavour. For mains, I was torn between the turbot and the lobster thermidor, but plumped for the latter, based on our friendly waiter's recommendation, and I was glad I did – it was cooked to perfection, with a mustard sauce and roasted cauliflowers complementing the sweet flesh of the crustacean. Dover sole Meuniere was my friend's main of choice, which came with spinach, wild mushroom, and a luxurious champagne essence – while delicious, the fish felt a bit chewy. We both really enjoyed the sides we shared, however, which include healthy options such as braised kale with white onion, sautéed broccolini and parsley-tossed potatoes. Any blips on our radar so far were well made up for by the dessert course – chocolate mille feuille, a five-layer concoction that married different chocolatey tastes and textures beautifully, and my star dish of the evening, a delectable coconut pavlova with mango and passionfruit sorbet, which provided a refreshing end to a seafood meal.

Best for: A special occasion

If you want to go: Around Dhs1,200 for two, without drinks. Call 04-3666705.

- Sudeshna Ghosh



Where: Geales, Le Royal Meridien Beach Resort and Spa, Dubai

What's it like: Tucked away in a corner of this well-established hotel is the new British seafood restaurant, which has outlets in London and Notting Hill. While the outdoor terrace beckons as soon as you walk in – it was bustling even late on a weeknight – inside, a stylish monochromatic colour scheme, leather couches, black and white Union Jack cushions that exude the British theme, and a fish market counter – where you can choose fish from an ice display – are also inviting.

After tucking into freshly baked, warm bread served in a little brown paper bag, we sated our seafood cravings with the first course offerings – juicy prawns covered in chilli flakes, and crispy calamari and zucchini; we polished off the tasty, crunchy vegetable strings with the aioli sauce. While I was tempted to ty their signature fish and chips, I opted for the lobster with thermidor sauce instead, served with potato cubes and salad leaves dressed in vinaigrette as sides. The lobster was slightly over-seasoned for my liking, but the sauce was warm and creamy, with flavours that lingered – a perfect winter indulgence. My partner had the salmon and cod bread-crumbed fish cakes, which were three generous meaty portions placed neatly on a bed of wilted spinach, and served with oodles of moreish sweet and tangy curry sauce.

For dessert, we enjoyed tucking into the white chocolate and raspberry ice cream with deconstructed blueberry crumble – a sweet match made in heaven, with the tartness of the berries beautifully complemented by the creamy, slightly fruity ice cream – as well as the hot chocolate fondant with a side of pistachio ice cream, a must-have for chocolate lovers.

If you want to go: Around Dhs600 for two, without drinks. Call 04-3165550.

- Nicola Monteath



Best for: Hearty, fuss-free comfort food

Photographs SUPPLIED and by REVIEWER

Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this month.


Toko

Japanese-style brunching

Chic restaurant Toko is the latest to introduce a brunch offering, with their new Kasa brunch. Grab a plate and fill it with salmon tartare with wasabi mayonnaise, asparagus with soy honey butter, and sushi from the extensive appetiser buffet. À la carte mains feature a meaty smoked miso salmon, succulent wagyu doused in teriyaki, lamb spare-ribs with sweet soy chilli, and grilled avocado with sweet soy and lime, to name a few. Desserts are served sharing-style at the table and include everything from chocolate tart to fruit cakes. *Fridays, from Dhs365 per person. Call 04-4428383.*



Asian flavours

Trader Vic's at Festival City and Madinat Jumeirah have launched a selection of new dishes on the menu with a new approach to the food. Seafood lovers can try the spicy tuna tartare with sriracha sauce and crispy nori, miso glazed black cod with crab and shrimp dumplings, or the baked crab and artichoke dip. Other dishes feature green bean fries in a mint batter with mustard mayo sauce, and Korean beef tacos. *À la carte menu, call 04-3665646.*



Barbecue fever!

Head to the newly opened Absolute Barbecues (Ab's) – a franchise from India – in Dubai Media City, to grill your own marinated meat and vegetables at the table – it's a fun experience for all! *Call 04-5520562.*

Belgian treat

Head to Belgian Café, InterContinental Dubai Festival City, for the Belge Fest...on a Soif brunch which takes place every weekend. You can try a three-course menu of salads and a selection of all-time favourite appertisers including crispy shrimp, calamari, and chicken wings, followed by mains like veal sausage, ribs, steamed mussels and roast chicken. Waffles are the sweet treat on offer for desserts – so leave space to indulge at the end of your meal! *Fridays and Saturdays, Dhs225 per person. Call 04-7011127.*

Alfresco after-hours

Popular American-style venue Caramel Restaurant and Lounge Dubai have opened a new outdoor terrace for the cooler months, which is ideal for those who want to enjoy the beautiful weather, along with new additions to their menu. A must-try is the beef tacos for appetisers, the juicy and tender shredded Kobe beef sliders for mains, with cheesy creamed corn with truffle oil as a side. A buzzing atmosphere makes this the place to head to on a Thursday evening! *À la carte menu, call 04-4256677.*

Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SUPPLIED





The Brazilian experience

Begin the weekend indulging in churrasco, and listening to Latin tunes by the poolside at Cabana, The Address Dubai Mall. You can feast on unlimited skewers of beef, lamb and chicken, cooked to perfection, and carved right at your table.
Thursday, from Dhs250 per person. Call 04-8883444.

Biz-y lunch

If you're working in the DIFC area, head to the newly opened Pret To Go at the Marble Walk, to choose gourmet sandwiches like peppered beef pastrami with grass-fed meat, bagels, Mexican and Arabic wraps, and Thai chicken curry, among many others – all made with local, organic ingredients free from additives, colourants and preservatives.
Call 8007738.



Power lunch

Boa Steakhouse at Eastern Mangroves Promenade are now offering a nutritious two-course business lunch menu showcasing dishes like asparagus and burrata cheese salad with truffle dressing to start with, and grilled sea bass fillet, or corn fed chicken roulade with grilled vegetables for mains.
From Sunday to Thursday, Dhs80 per person. Call 02-6411500.

Energy in a glass

If you're starting out a healthy eating plan, you ought to try the new range of antioxidant-rich juices and smoothies like banana apple (banana, lemons, apple, vanilla and mint), purple rain (beetroot, carrot, and ginger), and avocado punch (with agave and rocket leaves) at Kris Kros. It's a tasty way to get your five-a-day!
From Dhs22, call 04-4539994.

Shoppers' stop!

Eataly at Dubai Mall knows a lunch break is vital during a shopping spree. During the Dubai Shopping Festival, head to the Italian restaurant and retail space to indulge in soup or salad, pizza or pasta, and an espresso – to end the meal in true Italian fashion.
Daily from 3-7pm. Dhs39 per person, call 04-3308899.



Tempting parcels

Tuck into dim sum to your heart's content at the Dim Sum Festival at Sizzling Wok, Citymax Hotel Bur Dubai. Everything from chicken buns, seafood siomai and vegetable wontons are on the dinner menu.
January 10 onwards from Saturday to Wednesday. Dhs39 per person, call 04-4078000.

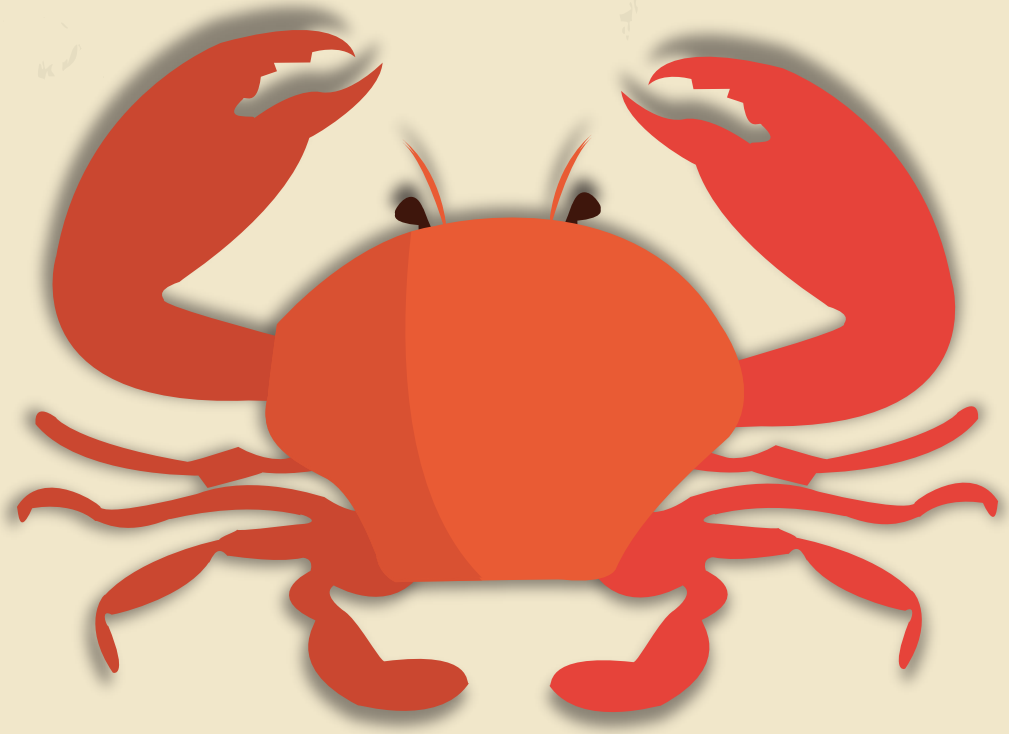


Luxury dining

We Love!

Looking for an evening with a difference? Look no further than Vivaldi by Alfredo Russo, the fine dining Italian restaurant at the recently revamped Sheraton Dubai Deira Creek, which has launched a new epicurean experience degustation menu that is guaranteed to surprise and delight even the most jaded of diners. Opt for a seven– or nine–course menu that features dishes like smoked salmon – where the salmon is served on a bed of smoking herbs; Orange scented fish carpaccio – a platter of fresh fish served in a cloud of delicately scented liquid nitrogen smoke; delicious mushroom cream finely topped with polenta; and melt-in-the-mouth braised veal cheek, to name a few. With a welcome aperitif, fine wine pairings, the option to enjoy dessert on the terrace, at a value-for-money price, and best of all – luxe limo transfers offered as well, there's really no reason to not try out this unique experience.
From Dhs290 per head, call 04-2071717.

Crab Craze



A blissful mount of freshwater pinchers and claws unravel in the kitchens of Benjarong with crabs — cooked in long-simmering authentic Thai style, creating a haven that will keep every seafood lover going for multiple servings.

Indulge on highlights encompassing Som Tum Punim (Spicy green papaya salad with crispy soft shell crab), Pu Pad Prig Gaeng (Stir-fried Alaska King Crab with red curry paste, string beans and sweet basil) and Sen Jun Pad Pu (Fried rice noodle with crab meat), amongst others.

Benjarong
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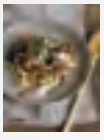
Mushroom & basil omelette with smashed tomato, recipe p34

Home Cooking

Inspiring recipes for easy everyday meals and stylish weekend entertaining

IN THIS SECTION


✳ Fresh new ideas for quick midweek meals, **P21**


✳ Seven days' worth of suppers sorted, **P24**


✳ Who knew vegan bakes could be so tempting? **P62**









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Make it tonight

Winter weeknight meals already stuck on repeat? Here's new inspiration with the recipes all requiring simple prep, easy-to-find ingredients, and no more than three steps each. Recipes KATY GILHOOLY Photographs ROB STREETER



Food styling KATY GREENWOOD

Lamb koftas with beetroot & apple raita

SERVES 6 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY | 1 OF 5 A DAY | GLUTEN FREE | ❄ koftas only

1 red onion, thinly sliced
Juice of 1 lemon, plus wedges to serve
800g lamb mince
4 tsp garam masala
200g natural yoghurt
1 apple, grated
1 small beetroot, about 50g, peeled and grated
Small bunch of coriander
Cooked rice or warmed wraps, to serve

1 Heat the grill to high. Toss the onion with half the lemon juice, plus some seasoning, and set aside.
2 Using your hands, mix the mince with 3 tsp of the garam masala and some seasoning. Divide the mix into 6, then roll each into a long thin sausage. Insert a skewer along the length of each kofta, then grill for 5 mins each side until cooked through. If using wooden skewers, soak them for 10 mins first.
3 Make the raita as the lamb cooks. Mix together the yoghurt, apple, beetroot, the remaining garam masala, the lemon juice and some seasoning. Serve the koftas with the onions, raita, lemon wedges, coriander leaves and cooked rice or wraps.

PER SERVING 488 kcals • protein 32g • carbs 48g • fat 19g • sat fat 9g • fibre 1g • sugar 6g • salt 0.3g »



Smoked mackerel, parsnip & Puy lentil salad

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 30 mins

EASY FOLATE FIBRE VIT C OMEGA-3 2 OF 5 A DAY

500g parsnips, peeled and cut into small cubes
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp clear honey
2 lemons, 1 juiced, 1 cut into wedges
2 tsp creamed horseradish
100g watercress
500g Puy lentils, cooked
4 smoked mackerel fillets, flaked

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Toss the parsnips with half the olive oil and some seasoning. Roast for 20 mins, drizzle with the honey, then roast for 10 mins more or until the parsnips are golden, sticky and tender. Meanwhile, make a dressing. Mix together the lemon juice, the horseradish and the remaining oil in a large bowl.

2 Toss the parsnips, watercress and lentils into the dressing, then divide between 4 plates. Top with the smoked mackerel and serve with the lemon wedges.

PER SERVING 500 kcals • protein 26g • carbs 44g • fat 21g • sat fat 4g • fibre 15g • sugar 10g • salt 2.4g



Sesame paneer wraps

SERVES 4 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY V CALCIUM FOLATE 1 OF 5 A DAY

4tbsp chilli sauce, or to taste (not to be confused with sweet chilli sauce or hot sauce, such as Tabasco)
100g natural yoghurt
450g paneer, cut into cubes
100g pack sesame seeds
2 tbsp sunflower oil
1 carrot, peeled and grated
½ cucumber, halved, deseeded and sliced into batons
2 Baby Gem lettuces, shredded
4 tortilla wraps, warmed

1 Mix 1 tsp of the chilli sauce with the yoghurt and some seasoning, and set side. Brush the paneer cubes with the remaining chilli sauce and roll each cube in the sesame seeds.

2 Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat and fry the paneer in batches for 5-8 mins or until golden all over. Turn the cubes frequently, as the seeds can catch easily. Drain on kitchen paper, then serve with the chilli yoghurt, carrot, cucumber, lettuce and warm wraps.

PER SERVING 530 kcals • protein 34g • carbs 34g • fat 27g • sat fat 9g • fibre 5g • sugar 11g • salt 1.7g



Butternut squash & goat's cheese spaghetti

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 35 mins

EASY V VIT C IRON 1 OF 5 A DAY

1 garlic bulb
1 tbsp olive oil
1 large butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into small cubes
350g spaghetti or linguine
Small bunch of sage, leaves only
100g goat's cheese, crumbled
50g toasted pine nuts

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Cut off the top third of the garlic bulb and discard. Drizzle the garlic with ½ tsp of the oil, season, then wrap in foil. Toss the squash with the remaining oil and some seasoning, then spread over a large, shallow baking tray. Add the garlic parcel to the tray and roast for 30 mins or until the squash is soft and starting to caramelise.

2 After 20 mins roasting time, boil the pasta following pack instructions. When the squash is ready, unwrap the garlic and carefully squeeze out the soft cloves. Drain the pasta, toss with the squash, garlic, sage and goat's cheese. Sprinkle over the pine nuts and serve.

PER SERVING 605 kcals • protein 22g • carbs 80g • fat 20g • sat fat 6g • fibre 8g • sugar 11g • salt 0.5g



Baked gnocchi with kale pesto & ham

SERVES 6 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 25 mins

EASY P

85g kale
50g walnut pieces
150ml olive oil
Juice of 1 lemon
50g Parmesan, roughly chopped
1kg gnocchi
4 thick slices of ham, diced
125g ball mozzarella, drained
100g bag mixed salad leaves

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Put the kale, walnuts, oil, lemon juice and Parmesan in a processor and blitz until the kale is very finely chopped. Bring a large pan of water to the boil and cook the gnocchi in 2 batches, for 2 mins each time.

2 Drain the gnocchi thoroughly, then tip into an ovenproof dish and stir through the kale pesto and the ham. Tear the mozzarella into pieces and dot over the gnocchi. Bake for 20-30 mins or until the cheese is bubbling. Serve with the salad leaves.

PER SERVING 653 kcals • protein 18g • carbs 56g • fat 39g • sat fat 9g • fibre 3g • sugar 1g • salt 3.6g GI



Yoghurt kebab begandi

The grocery list

1 loaf of ciabatta bread
40g black olives
100g cornflakes
300g cracked wheat
1 small bottle of capers or 10g fresh capers
160g sundried tomatoes
400g Baldo rice
300ml coconut milk
20 raspberries
6 green peppers
8 red peppers
2 boxes of chestnut mushrooms
2 punnets of cherry tomatoes
75g spring onions
3 lemons
8 aubergines
300g mixed lettuce leaves
900g fillet steak or ribeye
8 pcs chicken breasts
220g seabream fillet
250g salmon fillet
200g clams
125g squid
175g headless and cleaned prawns

Plus standard pantry ingredients such as flour, butter, oil, onions, garlic and herbs.

Eat well all week

with 1 bag of ingredients

Healthy, delicious suppers to get you through the entire week, with just one grocery shop, from Abs Patil, head chef at Big Chefs café and brasserie. Photographs ANAS CHERUR

Abs Patil is no stranger to the UAE's restaurant scene. He has worked at both Jamie's Italian outlets in Dubai, and prior to that, gained experience in Mumbai, Miami and London. He now heads up the first Dubai outpost of Turkish restaurant brand, Big Chefs, at The Beach in JBR, where he serves an international menu in a rustic style, with most dishes made from fresh, local ingredients.

Text and styling NICOLA MONTEATH. Props from CRATE AND BARREL

Yoghurt kebab begandi

SERVES 4 **PREP** 40 mins **COOK** 30 mins EASY

20ml olive oil
500g aubergines (4 large and 4 small)
100g white onions
2-3 garlic cloves
50g parmesan cheese
100ml cooking cream
A pinch of nutmeg
A pinch of black pepper
A pinch of salt
FOR THE KEBAB
30ml olive oil
400g sirloin steak
20g thyme
2-3 dry red chilies
20g garlic, chopped
A pinch of salt
100g ciabatta bread
50g melted butter
200g yoghurt
FOR THE SUNDRIED TOMATO SAUCE
50ml olive oil
100g sundried tomatoes
Very small handful of parsley leaves
A few basil leaves (about 2g)

1 Cut the small aubergines into wedges, and sprinkle salt. Set aside for 10 mins. Rinse and shallow fry in a pan.
2 Roast the large aubergines on direct flame for 10-15 mins. Once they start losing water, remove the skin and mash their pulp.
3 Sauté onions and garlic in a pan and add the abubergine pulp. Cook for 4-5 mins. Add grated parmesan, cooking cream and nutmeg. Cook for a few mins.
4 To make the sundried tomato sauce, blend the olive oil, sundried tomato, parsley and basil leaves.
5 Cut the sirloin steak into small strips and sauté in hot olive oil with garlic, thyme and dry red chilies.
6 Cut ciabatta bread into small rectangular cubes, dip in melted butter, and toast.
7 Serve the kebabs in a bowl with a layer of toasted ciabatta, fried aubergine wedges, begandi pulp, sundried tomato sauce and a drizzle of yoghurt. Garnish with thyme leaves and crushed chilies.

PER SERVING 810 kcals • protein 43.8g • carbs 34.5g • fat 56g • sat fat 21g • fibre 8.2g • sugar 13.8g • salt 1.9g



Chicken baked in a bag

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30 mins **COOK** 25 mins EASY

300g cracked wheat
400ml hot water
4 chicken breasts
60g sundried tomato
Salt and cracked black pepper
Juice of ½ a lemon
30ml olive oil
10g capers
20g basil leaves
20g mint leaves
20g parsley leaves
40g black olives
120g green peppers
120g red peppers
80g chestnut mushrooms
80g cherry vine tomatoes

1 Boil 300ml of water with a pinch of salt and pepper. Add this to the cracked wheat and cover with a lid or foil. Set aside for 15-20 mins.
2 Marinate the chicken breast with sundried tomato paste, salt, black pepper, lemon juice and olive oil – do this overnight if you can.
3 Cut aluminium foil into 4 squares approximately 40x40cm in size, and drizzle a little oil on it. Cut 4 pieces of grease or parchment paper in the same size, and place on each piece of foil, the oil will hold the papers together.
4 Mix the cooked cracked wheat with olive oil, capers, basil, mint, parsley, black olives, red and green peppers, chestnut mushroom and crushed cherry tomatoes, and season.
5 Place ¼ of the cracked wheat mix in the middle of the foil and paper base. Add the marinated chicken breast on top and squeeze some lemon juice. Add 25ml of water and fold over the foil to wrap into a parcel. Leave enough air space inside the pouch and seal all the ends to ensure it gets cooked with steam. Repeat with the remaining ingredients to make the other three parcels. Bake at 200C for 20-25 mins. Garnish with some fresh herbs and drizzle with olive oil before serving.

PER SERVING 590 kcals • protein 40.8g • carbs 62.6g • fat 19g • sat fat 3g • fibre 12.6g • sugar 3.6g • salt 1.2g »



Seafood baldo

SERVES 4 **PREP** 40 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY

200g baldo rice
50ml olive oil
40g mint leaves
75g spring onions
400ml water
20g garlic, chopped
30ml olive oil
100g salmon, diced
100g sea bream fillet, diced
100g clams
50g cleaned squid rings
75g headless prawns
50g red bell pepper, chopped
10g parsley leaves
50g cherry tomatoes
50g chestnut mushrooms
½ lemon
2g black pepper
A pinch of salt

1 Heat oil in a thick bottomed pan and sauté the rice for at least 10 mins. Add mint and spring onions and sauté for 2 mins. Stir in warm water and cook for further 15 mins on very low flame. Once the water is almost reduced, switch off the flame and cover the container. Set aside.
2 Heat the oil in a pan and sauté garlic and all the seafood together. Once the seafood is almost cooked and clams have opened, add chopped parsley, cherry tomatoes and mushrooms. Cook for 3-4 mins. Add the cooked rice and season.
PER SERVING 492 kcals • protein 23.6g • carbs 43.2g • fat 25.5g • sat fat 3.8g • fibre 3g • sugar 2.2g • salt 0.4g



Smoked beef ham and yoghurt manti

SERVES 4 **PREP** 45 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY

300g plain flour
2 eggs, lightly beaten
10ml water
A pinch of salt
Dollop of yoghurt, to serve
Fresh herbs, for garnish
FOR THE SMOKED HAM MIXTURE
40g white onions, finely chopped
100g beef fillet, finely chopped
100g smoked beef ham, finely chopped
Two pinches of dried red chilli flakes
A few mint leaves, chopped
A pinch of salt
FOR THE MANTI SAUCE
50ml olive oil
20g thyme
Pinch of dry red chili flakes
50g sliced beef
40g butter
A pinch of salt

1 To make the dough, place the flour and salt in a bowl and make a well in the middle. Mix the eggs with water and whisk well to combine. Add to the flour and knead into a soft dough with your hands, add little more water if you need. Wrap the dough with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 mins.
2 Sauté the onions, add the minced beef and cook for 20 mins. Add the beef ham, dried chili flakes and mint. Cook for 6-7 mins, until all the juices have evaporated. Season well.
3 Divide the dough in four equal size portions, and cover with a damp tea towel for 30 mins.
4 Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to make large paper thin rectangles. Using a sharp knife cut the dough in 4cm squares, place 1 tsp of the meat mixture in the middle of each square. Lift up all four corners to join in the middle, pressing to make square parcels with seams running down each sides.
5 Bring a saucepan of salted water to boil and cook these.
6 Heat olive oil in a frying pan over medium heat until it sizzles, then add chilli flakes, and chopped thyme, and cook for 1 min. Add the slices of beef and fry for another 2 mins. Add the manti to it and toss well to coat. Serve in a bowl and spoon over a dollop of yoghurt. Garnish with fresh herbs.
PER SERVING 584 kcals • protein 25.6g • carbs 59.3g • fat 29g • sat fat 10.7g • fibre 2.7g • sugar 1g • salt 1.5g



Salmon and sea bream moqueca

SERVES 4 **PREP** 25 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY

15ml olive oil
20g crushed garlic
2-3 dry red chillies
50g white onion, diced
100g red peppers, diced
100g green peppers, diced
50g cherry tomatoes
300ml coconut milk
50ml water
50g palm oil
120g salmon, diced
150g sea bream fillet, diced
100g clams
75g cleaned squid rings
100g headless prawns
20g parsley, chopped
A pinch of salt

Heat olive oil in a deep frying pan and sauté the garlic, onions and peppers. Cook for 4-5 mins. Add the red chillies and coconut milk, and bring to a simmer. Add the seafood and cherry tomatoes. Simmer on low for 10 mins and cover. If required, add little water to loosen the sauce. Stir in palm oil and parsley, and cook for a few mins to melt the palm oil. Serve with boiled rice or crusty bread.

PER SERVING 492 kcals • protein 27.4g • carbs 13g • fat 37g • sat fat 21.5g • fibre 2.7g • sugar 5.5g • salt 0.4g »



Chestnut beef involtini

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY

300g fillet steak or rib eye steak
50g parmesan cheese
100g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
A few parsley leaves (about 10g)
10ml olive oil
Lemon zest, for garnish
A few sprigs of thyme (about 10g)
FOR THE MUSHROOM SAUCE
30ml olive oil
200g chestnut mushrooms, quartered
10g garlic cloves, crushed
5g dry chilies
5g parsley, chopped
10g thyme leaves
50g butter
½ lemon
A pinch of salt and black pepper

1 Slice the beef fillet to 5mm thickness and pound with a hammer or a heavy object until it flattens to become about 15cm long and 8-10cm wide.

2 Heat olive oil and fry the mushrooms and garlic for 5-6 mins. Add the parsley and thyme leaves and season.
3 Spread a thin layer of the cooked mushrooms on the beef fillet and sprinkle some parmesan cheese. Wrap the beef around the stuffing to make a roll, and spear a toothpick to hold the shape while cooking. Heat oil in a thick bottomed pan and fry beef rolls in olive oil over high flame. Once all sides are brown in colour, reduce the flame and cook for further 5-6 mins.
4 In another pan, heat olive oil on high flame and fry mushrooms for 3-4 mins. Reduce the flame and add the crushed garlic, dry chillies, chopped parsley and thyme. Squeeze a bit of lemon juice and add to the beef rolls. Cook for another 2-3 mins, add a dash of water to get a gravy from the meat juices.
5 Cut in half, and serve with the mushrooms, garnished with lemon zest and thyme.

PER SERVING 406 kcals • protein 26.7g • carbs 3.7g • fat 33g • sat fat 15.7g • fibre 1.2g • sugar 1.7g • salt 0.5g



Citrus hazelnut chicken

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30 mins **COOK** 20 mins EASY

100g hazelnuts
100g cornflakes
4 chicken breasts
100g flour
3 whole eggs
A pinch of salt
A pinch of pepper
400ml sunflower oil
FOR THE SALAD BASE
300g mixed lettuce
2 oranges
2 pink grapefruits
50g raspberries
100g cherry tomatoes
30ml olive oil
2 lemons
A pinch of salt and black pepper

1 Roughly crush the hazelnut and cornflakes and mix together.
2 Butterfly the chicken breast with a knife, and pound to make it a little thinner.
3 Dust the chicken with flour, and dip in a beaten egg. Coat the chicken with cornflakes mix, and refrigerate for 1 hr.
4 Mix the washed lettuce leaves with raspberries, cherry tomatoes, orange and grapefruit segments. Dress with lemon juice, and olive oil, and season it with salt and pepper.
5 Shallow fry the hazelnut coated chicken in sunflower oil, and serve on the salad.

PER SERVING 590 kcals • protein 40.8g • carbs 62.6g • fat 19g • sat fat 3g • fibre 12.6g • sugar 3.6g • salt 1.2g GF



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Your healthy diet plan

Shape up for the New Year with this quick-results eating plan designed to make you feel lighter, brighter, and more energetic in just nine days. Thoroughly tested and approved by our nutritional therapist, it's also absolutely delicious!









Just **9 days** to feeling fabulous

Photographs ROB STREETER | Food styling KATY GREENWOOD | Styling REBECCA NEWPORT

Welcome to our exclusive nine-day plan – it's made up of three smaller plans, each with a specific goal. This is how it works:
Days 1–3 Beat the bloat and cleanse the body
Days 4–6 Glow from within – your plan for better skin
Days 7–9 Re-energise and re-balance

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU START

Over the first couple of days, as the body cleanses itself, you may get a mild headache, or feel irritable and a little hungry as your blood sugar levels adjust. But by the end of the nine days, you will probably be feeling and looking slimmer, healthier, and more energetic than you'd have thought possible while eating so well!

- **Starting on a Friday** means you can begin your new eating regime when you have more time and are less caught up in your weekday routine. I've deliberately kept weekday recipes easier, too.
- **The meals are designed** to provide the perfect balance of complete proteins, slow-burning carbs, vitamin–and fibre–rich vegetables and salads, while being low in salt and refined sugars.
- **To make things easier** – and save time – many weekday lunches are 'upcycled' from dinner the previous evening. This cuts down the time you need to spend on prepping a lunch, as you don't need to make it from scratch.
- **The vegetarian options** can of course be enjoyed by everyone, and the twice-daily snacks will ensure that you maintain your energy levels.

HOW THE PLAN WORKS

Days 1-3 Beating the bloat

Bloating is a common side effect of an unhealthy diet, usually triggered by refined carbohydrates and sugar. Eliminating these foods will tackle bloating, and prepare your body for an overall cleanse. Where a naturally high-salt ingredient like fish or halloumi (useful protein sources) are used, we've made sure the rest of the day is low in salt. You'll find plenty of wholegrains here to keep you feeling full, while yoghurt will help to reset the balance of good bacteria in your digestive system, making sure your food is better absorbed. Just as important as what you eat and drink is the way you do it. My plan helps ease your body into the cleansing process with cooked and soaked foods rather than raw, which are harder to digest. This is also the time to drink your eight glasses of water a day to ensure that you are thoroughly hydrated. While you're making this change to your diet, be kind to yourself: set aside enough time so that you can relax and focus on your food. Chew slowly and deliberately, enjoy the wonderful flavours and textures.

Days 4-6 Boost your skin from within

Skin – our largest organ – needs proper nurturing and nourishment from within. Fatty acids (particularly omega-3), vitamin E and vitamin C are essential for its care and maintenance. So these days are packed with ingredients rich in those fats and nutrients, such as oats, spinach, nuts, seeds, salmon and avocado. Our skin's health is supported by good liver function, and citrus fruits play an important role, as they're highly alkaline and are known to promote liver detoxification. Antioxidants are a must, and you'll find them here in the range of colourful leafy greens, sweet peas, fresh herbs, peppers and beetroot. For an added antioxidant boost, swap your regular cuppa for green tea – aim for three cups a day. Also, maintain your water intake.

Days 7-9 More energy, better balance

These final days are designed to leave you feeling refreshed, energetic and body-aware.
The recipes focus on stabilising and balancing your blood sugar levels, with protein at every meal and plenty of protein-rich snacks. Combined with good (unsaturated and polyunsaturated) fats, this slows down the release of sugars into the blood and leaves you feeling satiated but not overly full. Magnesium and B vitamins are vital for converting foods to energy. My recipes include eggs, spinach, lamb's lettuce, wholegrains, chickpeas, mackerel and lamb, and have been designed for their energy-giving properties – as well as for the relaxing properties associated with magnesium. Finally, now that you're in great shape from the food, add some physical exercise into your day, to channel your extra energy and help control your weight. Walking, swimming, dancing – whatever you enjoy, exercise triggers the production of serotonin, the feel-good hormone that helps you glow even more!

Why the right fats are so important

There's a reason that omega fats are called 'essential fatty acids'. Our bodies cannot produce them, so we need to get them through food. This plan is packed with abundant sources of omega-3, such as oily fish (salmon, mackerel and tuna), walnuts, linseeds and chia seeds, as well as the ingredients featured in Days 4-6, which target your skin.

YOU NEED A SNACK – SO MAKE IT A GOOD ONE

Snacks are an essential part of this plan – just make sure your snacks are healthy and protein-rich. Have one mid-morning and one in the afternoon.

Think of them as a pit stop for your body and brain, which helps stabilise flagging blood sugar and glucose levels, allowing you to maintain concentration and energy levels. They also play a crucial role in weight loss, as healthy snacking stops you craving sugary top-ups.

To avoid the wrong kind of snack, you need to be a bit organised:

- Upcycle as much food as you can, using leftover pulses, nuts, vegetables, fruits and dairy from earlier meals.
- Seeds are a must, as is oily fish – a portion of mackerel pâté, for example, is packed with omega-3 fatty acids, essential for those grey (and white and red) cells, as well as for promoting glowing skin and stabilising moods.
- Healthy snacks don't have to be boring – try a handful of calcium-rich almonds with a sweet crunchy apple, a dollop of cottage cheese with some semi-dried tomatoes, a cup of edamame beans, or half an avocado with a slice of prosciutto. >>

Day one

BREAKFAST

Cinnamon crêpes with nut butter, sliced banana & raspberries

SERVES 2 ● **PREP** 5 mins ● **COOK** 10 mins

EASY V VIT C 1 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

75g gluten-free brown bread flour
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 medium egg
225ml semi-skimmed milk
1 tsp rapeseed oil, for frying
2 tbsp Almond nut butter (see recipe, right)
1 banana, sliced
140g raspberries
Lemon wedges

1 Tip the flour into a large mixing bowl with the cinnamon. Add the egg and milk, and whisk vigorously until you have a smooth pouring consistency.

2 Place a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and add a little of the oil. When the oil starts to heat, wipe most of it away with kitchen paper. Once the pan is hot, pour a small amount of the batter into the centre of the pan and swirl it to the sides of the pan in a thin layer. Leave to cook, untouched, for about 2 mins. When it is brown underneath, turn over and cook for 1 min more.

3 Transfer to a warm plate and cover with foil to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining batter. Divide the warm pancakes between 2 plates and serve with the nut butter, banana, raspberries and lemon to assemble at the table.

PER SERVING 376 kcals • protein 14g • carbs 46g • fat 16g • sat fat 3g • fibre 5g • sugar 17g • salt 0.3g

Buying a nut butter

If you don't have time to make your own, you can order online from theproteinbakeshop.com or instagram.com/bare.dubai.



Almond nut butter

SERVES 10 **PREP** 10 mins **NO COOK**

EASY V GLUTEN FREE

250g blanched almonds
2 tsp mild oil, such as coconut, almond or olive oil

Put the almonds in a food processor and blitz on high speed until finely chopped and the nuts have come together to form a thick ball. With the processor still running, add the oil, 1 tsp at a time, until the mixture is a smooth, glossy paste – about 7 mins. Spoon into a clean jar, and keep tightly closed and refrigerated when not in use. *Will keep in the fridge for up to 3 weeks.*

PER SERVING 158 kcals • protein 5g • carbs 2g • fat 15g • sat fat 1g • fibre 2g • sugar 1g • salt none





LUNCH
Asparagus salad with a runny poached egg

SERVES 2 ● **PREP** 5 mins ● **COOK** 8 mins

EASY V LOW CAL FOLATE 2 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
200g peeled cooked beetroot (not in vinegar), cut into bite-sized pieces
2 handfuls mixed leaves
¼ cucumber, cut into batons
8 asparagus spears, trimmed
2 large free-range eggs

1 Pour the olive oil and vinegar into a small bowl, mix well and add the beetroot. Divide the mixed leaves and cucumber between 2 plates.
2 Blanch the asparagus in a pan of simmering water for 2 mins, then remove and set aside. Crack the eggs into the pan and gently simmer for 3 mins until the whites are cooked and the yolks are just beginning to set, but still runny. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper.
3 Meanwhile, add the beetroot to the salad plates, pour over the dressing and lightly toss together. Top each plate with asparagus and a poached egg to serve.

PER SERVING 228 kcals • protein 13g • carbs 13g • fat 13g • sat fat 3g • fibre 5g • sugar 12g • salt 0.5g

DINNER
Prawn, butternut & mango curry

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 25 mins

EASY LOW CAL CALCIUM FOLATE FIBRE VIT C IRON 3 OF 5 A DAY

½ (about 200g) butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into bite-sized pieces
75g quick-cook brown basmati or wild rice (cook 50g extra if upcycling for tomorrow's lunch)
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1cm piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely sliced
1 lemongrass stalk, woody tip and outer leaves removed, bulbous end lightly bashed (to help release oils)
½ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
½ tsp each turmeric, ground cumin and ground coriander
½ ripe mango, peeled, stoned and cut into chunks
200g baby spinach
150ml vegetable stock (or water)
150ml low-fat coconut milk
175g raw king prawns
1 tsp low-salt tamari or soy sauce
Juice of 1 lime
2 tbsp coriander, finely chopped

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Tip the butternut squash into a non-stick roasting tin and roast for 15-20 mins or until almost soft. Remove and set aside.
2 Meanwhile, cook the rice following pack instructions until tender. Drain and cover to keep warm. (Set aside the extra for tomorrow if required.) Heat the oil in a wok or large non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 2 mins until soft but not coloured. Add the ginger, garlic, lemongrass, chilli and spices, and cook for 3 mins more.
3 Stir through the mango and roasted butternut squash, then add the spinach and pour over the stock and coconut milk. Gently stir to combine, slowly bring to the boil, then reduce to a simmer for a few mins until the spinach starts to wilt.
4 Add the prawns and stir. Once the prawns are pink through (about 3 mins), remove the lemongrass and discard. Add the tamari, lime juice and coriander, and stir well. Just before serving, check the seasoning, adding more lime juice or tamari if needed. Serve with the rice.

PER SERVING 435 kcals • protein 24g • carbs 56g • fat 13g, sat fat 5g • fibre 10g • sugar 23g • salt 1.5g >>



Day two

BREAKFAST

Mushroom & basil omelette with smashed tomato

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 15 mins

EASY V FOLATE 2 OF 5 A DAY

2 tomatoes, halved
3 medium free-range eggs
1 tbsp snipped chives
1 tsp unsalted butter
300g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
2 tbsp low-fat cream cheese
1 tbsp basil leaves, finely chopped

1 Heat the grill to its highest setting and place the tomatoes on a square of foil underneath, turning occasionally to prevent burning. When the tomatoes are slightly scorched, remove from the grill, squashing them slightly to release the juices.
2 Break the eggs into a bowl and mix with a fork. Add a small splash of water and mix. Add the chives and some black pepper, and beat some more. Set aside while you prepare the mushrooms.
3 In a non-stick frying pan, heat the butter over a medium heat until foaming. Add the mushrooms and cook for 5-8 mins until tender, stirring every few mins. Remove and set aside.
4 Briskly stir the egg mixture, then add to the hot pan (tilting it so that the mixture covers the entire base) and leave for 10 secs or so until it begins to set. With a fork, gently stir the egg here and there so that any unset mixture gets cooked.
5 While the egg mixture is still slightly loose, spoon the mushroom mix onto one side of the omelette, and top with the cream cheese and basil leaves. Flip the other side of the omelette over to cover, if you like. Leave to cook for 1 min more, then cut in half and slide each half onto a plate. Serve immediately with the tomatoes on the side.

PER SERVING 196 kcals • protein 14g • carbs 4g • fat 14g • sat fat 5g • fibre 3g • sugar 4g • salt 0.5g





LUNCH

Tuna, sweetcorn & pea salad in Baby Gem lettuce wraps

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **NO COOK** EASY LOW CAL HEART HEALTHY FOLATE FIBRE VIT C IRON GLUTEN FREE

1½ tbsp low-fat natural yoghurt
85g canned tuna chunks (in spring water), drained
75g cooked rice, from last night's dinner (or 25g, cooked and cooled)
85g frozen peas, cooked, then refreshed in cold water
½ red pepper, chopped
1 avocado, stoned, peeled and cut into chunks
Zest and juice of 1 lime
Small pack coriander, chopped
1 large Baby Gem, or other crisp lettuce such as cos

1 Combine all the ingredients except the lettuce in a bowl, season, then chill until ready to eat. Spoon the tuna mix on top of the lettuce leaves, wrap up and enjoy.

PER SERVING 277 kcals • protein 20g • carbs 22g • fat 12g • sat fat 3g • fibre 8g • sugar 7g • salt 0.2g

DINNER

Lemon & garlic roast chicken with charred broccoli & sweet potato mash

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 1 hr-1 hr 15 mins

EASY LOW CAL FIBRE VIT C 2 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU

1 small free-range chicken (about 1kg)
2 garlic cloves
1 tsp rapeseed oil
Small bunch of thyme
1 lemon, halved
1 small head broccoli (about 200g), cut into small florets
200g sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed (cook 100g extra if you are using for tomorrow's lunch)
1 tbsp low-fat cream cheese

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan and put the chicken in a large non-stick roasting tin. Halve 1 garlic clove and rub it over the chicken. Drizzle with oil, rub in with your fingers, then stuff the cavity with the thyme, 1 lemon half and the garlic you just used.
2 Cut the other lemon half into quarters and scatter around the chicken with the other garlic clove, halved.
3 Cover the tin with foil and bake for 40 mins, then remove the foil and spoon over the hot juices. Arrange the broccoli around the chicken, turning well in the juices, and return the tin to the oven for another 20-30 mins. To check that it is cooked through, pierce between the leg and thigh – if the juices run clear, the chicken is ready. Re-cover with foil and set aside while you prepare the sweet potatoes.
4 Put the sweet potatoes in a pan of boiling water, return to the boil, then simmer for 7-10 mins until tender. Drain well, then mash. Set aside 100g of sweet potato mash (if using for tomorrow's lunch), then add the cream cheese to the rest and stir well.
5 Remove the broccoli from the roasting tin and divide between 2 plates. Put the chicken on a serving plate, discard the lemon and garlic from the tin and remove as much of the fat from the juices as possible. Pour the remaining juices into a serving jug.
6 Carve the chicken and serve about 100g (1-2 slices) per person (keep the rest of the chicken for tomorrow's lunch). Serve with the broccoli and mashed sweet potatoes, and a drizzle of the lemony-garlic juices on top.

PER SERVING 369 kcals • protein 34g • carbs 32g • fat 12g • sat fat 4g • fibre 8g • sugar 16g • salt 0.5g



Day three



BREAKFAST

Avocado & strawberry smoothie

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **NO COOK** EASY V LOW CAL CALCIUM VIT C 1 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

½ avocado, stoned, peeled and cut into chunks
150g strawberries, halved
4 tbsp low-fat natural yoghurt
200ml semi-skimmed milk
Lemon or lime juice, to taste
Honey, to taste

Put all the ingredients in a blender and whizz until smooth. If the consistency is too thick, add a little water.

PER SERVING 197 kcals • protein 9g • carbs 15g • fat 11g • sat fat 3g • fibre 3g • sugar 15g • salt 0.3g »



LUNCH
Chicken wrap with sticky sweet potato, salad leaves & tomatoes

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **NO COOK**

EASY | FIBRE | 1 OF 5 A DAY | GLUTEN FREE

100g cooked sweet potatoes (from last night's dinner)
2 multigrain wraps
200g cooked chicken, shredded (from last night's dinner)
Small handful of salad leaves
Small handful of baby plum or cherry tomatoes, halved

1 Mash last night's sweet potato so that it's very smooth, then divide the mixture thinly and evenly between the wraps.
2 Divide the chicken, salad leaves and tomatoes between each wrap.
3 Fold the wrap and roll up, making sure that you contain the filling. Eat straight away or wrap in baking parchment and string (or foil) for later.

PER SERVING 346 kcals • protein 31g • carbs 33g • fat 9g • sat fat 3g • fibre 9g • sugar 11g • salt 0.9g

DINNER
Falafels with hummous & tabbouleh

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY | V | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | IRON | 3 OF 5 A DAY | GOOD 4 YOU

FOR THE FALAFEL
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp coriander seeds
400g can chickpeas, drained
400g can butter beans, drained
Juice ½ lemon
Handful of coriander, including stalks
¼ red chilli, deseeded and chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 egg yolk, beaten
Handful of parsley
4 tbsp wholemeal flour
FOR THE HUMMOUS
400g can chickpeas, drained
1 tbsp tahini
Pinch of ground cumin
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Juice of ½ a lemon
FOR THE TABBOULEH
50g barley couscous
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Juice 1 lemon
Small handful each of parsley, mint and coriander, finely chopped
2 spring onions, white parts only, finely sliced
½ cucumber, deseeded and cut into small pieces
3 tomatoes, quartered, deseeded and cut into small pieces

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan and put a non-stick baking tray inside. For the falafels, heat a large non-stick frying pan, add the cumin and coriander seeds and dry-fry until fragrant (1-2 mins), stirring occasionally to prevent burning. Remove from the pan.
2 Put the seeds, the remaining falafel ingredients and some seasoning into a food processor and blitz until you have a chunky paste. If it seems too dry, add 1 tsp water and blitz again until you have the consistency of damp sand. Using your hands, divide the mixture into 12 falafel balls and chill for 30 mins.
3 Heat a non-stick frying pan. When hot, add the falafel balls, pressing down into the pan to make patties. Leave to cook, without turning, for 2-3 mins, then check to make sure they're brown and crisp. Turn and cook the other side for 2 mins more. Remove from the pan, transfer to the baking tray in the oven and cook for a further 10 mins. Meanwhile, prepare the barley couscous following pack instructions.
4 For the hummous, put all the ingredients, except the lemon juice, into a food processor and blitz to form a stiff paste. With the motor running, slowly add the lemon juice and up to 3 tbsp water to get it to the consistency of your choice.
5 For the tabbouleh, mix the olive oil, lemon juice and some black pepper in a small bowl. In a larger bowl, combine the rest of the tabbouleh ingredients, along with the cooked couscous, and add the dressing. Mix well.
6 Put aside 4 falafels and 4 tbsp hummous in the fridge for tomorrow's lunch. Serve the remaining falafels with the remaining hummous and the tabbouleh.

PER SERVING 509 kcals • protein 22g • carbs 73g • fat 16g • sat fat 2g • fibre 14g • sugar 7g • salt 1.6g



Tip The small amount of flour in the falafels will help hold them together. You could use gram (chickpea) flour if you have some.

Day four

BREAKFAST
Vanilla-almond chia breakfast bowl

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins plus soaking **NO COOK**

EASY V FIBRE 1 OF 5 A DAY

FOR THE PORRIDGE
50g jumbo porridge oats
200ml unsweetened almond milk
½ tsp vanilla extract
2 tbsp low-fat natural yoghurt
25g chia seeds
FOR THE TOPPING
150g punnet blueberries
25g almonds, slivered
Clear honey, to taste

1 Mix all the porridge ingredients in a bowl and leave to soak for at least



20 mins. Once the oats have softened, stir through half the blueberries. If the porridge is too dry, add a little water.
2 Divide the mixture between 2 bowls and top each with the remaining berries, almonds and honey.

PER SERVING 322 kcals • protein 11g • carbs 32g • fat 14g • sat fat 2g • fibre 10g • sugar 13g • salt 0.3g

LUNCH
Stuffed Moroccan pita

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **NO COOK**

EASY V FIBRE VIT C 2 OF 5 A DAY

4 tbsp hummous (from last night's dinner)
2 wheat-free pitta pockets
4 falafels, halved (from last night's dinner)
½ red pepper, deseeded and sliced
Handful rocket leaves

1 Spread the hummous on the inside of each pitta, then layer with the falafels, pepper and rocket.

PER PITA 396 kcals • protein 14g • carbs 61g • fat 11g • sat fat 1g • fibre 9g • sugar 6g • salt 0.4g





DINNER
Crispy Asian salmon with stir-fried noodles, pak choi & sugar snap peas

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 15 mins

EASY LOW CAL FOLATE VIT C OMEGA-3 2 OF 5 A DAY

4 x 100g salmon fillets
FOR THE MARINADE
2 tsp tamari or soy sauce
2cm piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped or grated
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
2 tbsp lemon or lime juice
1 tsp sesame oil
FOR THE STIR-FRIED NOODLES
85g vermicelli rice noodles
2 tsp rapeseed oil
1 tsp sesame oil
1 spring onion, trimmed and thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
½ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
2cm piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped
100g sugar snap peas
100g pak choi (or spinach)
1 large red pepper, sliced
1 tsp tamari or soy sauce
1 tsp Thai fish sauce
Juice ½ lime
1 tbsp coriander, finely chopped

1 Make the marinade by mixing together all the ingredients. Place the salmon fillets in a small bowl and spoon over the marinade, turning the fish so that it's nicely coated. Cover with cling film and leave to sit for 10 mins (or longer if you have time).
2 Meanwhile, cook the noodles following pack instructions, then drain and sit them in a bowl of cold water.
3 Heat a non-stick frying pan. Add the salmon fillets, skin-side down, and leave for 3 mins. When the fish is slightly crispy, flip over and cook for a further 3 mins on the other side. Just before you remove the fish from the pan, add any remaining marinade and let it sizzle for 10 secs. Place 2 of the fillets, skin-side up, with their juices on a plate and cover with foil to keep warm. Put the other 2 fillets on another plate for tomorrow, cover with foil, leave to cool, then chill.
4 In a frying pan or wok, heat the rapeseed and sesame oils over a high heat. Add the spring onion, garlic, chilli and ginger, and stir constantly for about 1 min. Add the sugar snap peas, pak choi and pepper, and stir for another 1-2 mins, then add the cooked noodles. Toss well, then add the tamari sauce, fish sauce and lime juice, and continue cooking, mixing everything in until well combined and the pan is sizzling.
5 Remove from the heat and divide between 2 bowls. Top each with a salmon fillet and drizzle over any juices. Sprinkle with coriander and serve.

PER SERVING 444 kcals • protein 27g • carbs 43g • fat 17g • sat fat 3g • fibre 4g • sugar 8g • salt 1.5g »

Day five



BREAKFAST
Minty pineapple smoothie

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **NO COOK**

EASY | V | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | 1 OF 5 A DAY | GOOD 4 YOU

200g pineapple, peeled, cored and cut into chunks
A few mint leaves
50g baby spinach leaves
25g oats
2 tbsp linseeds
Handful unsalted, unroasted cashew nuts
Fresh lime juice, to taste

Put all the ingredients in a blender with 200ml water and process until smooth. If it's too thick, add more water (up to 400ml) until you get the right mix.

PER SERVING 177 kcals • protein 6g • carbs 19g • fat 8g • sat fat 1g • fibre 4g • sugar 11g • salt 0.1g

LUNCH
Flaked salmon salad with honey dressing

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **NO COOK**

EASY | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | OMEGA-3 | 2 OF 5 A DAY

2 generous handfuls of baby salad leaves, rocket or lamb's lettuce
140g sugar snap peas
1 avocado, stoned, peeled and diced
2 cooked salmon fillets (from last night's dinner), flaked, skin removed
Small handful of coriander, finely chopped
FOR THE DRESSING
½ tsp clear honey
1 tbsp boiling (or very hot) water
2 tsp cider vinegar
1 tsp tamari or soy sauce
1 tbsp mirin (use Sherry or sweet Marsala wine if you haven't got mirin)

1 For the dressing, put the honey and hot water in a jar, and shake vigorously to loosen the honey. Add the other dressing ingredients and mix well.
2 Put the salad leaves, sugar snap peas and avocado in a large bowl or plastic container, and mix together. Scatter the salmon and the coriander on top. Serve directly from the bowl with the dressing on the side.

PER SERVING 449 kcals • protein 25g • carbs 13g • fat 32g • sat fat 6g • fibre 7g • sugar 9g • salt 1.2g





DINNER
Goat's cheese & caramelised onion frittata with a lemony green salad

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY | V | LOW CAL | FOLATE | FIBRE | 3 OF 5 A DAY | GLUTEN FREE

4 tsp rapeseed oil
2 large red onions, finely sliced
4 tsp clear honey
8 large free-range eggs
140g goat's cheese
100g salad leaves (such as rocket, baby leaves, watercress and spinach)
250g cooked beetroot, sliced
Juice ½ lemon

1 Heat the grill to high. Put the oil and onions in a medium-to-large ovenproof non-stick frying pan and sweat on a low-medium heat with the lid on for about 10 mins, or until they begin to soften and brown a little at the edges. Reduce heat to low, add the honey, stir well, then leave to bubble for 1 min or so. Meanwhile, crack the eggs into a bowl and beat with a fork, then add some black pepper.
2 Pour the eggs into the pan and cook for 5-6 mins until almost set. Break the goat's cheese into large chunks and dot over the top. Place the frittata under the hot grill for 3 mins, then shake to check that the egg is set firm and the cheese is soft and bubbling. Pop it back under the grill for 1 min or so more if needed.
3 Mix the salad leaves and beetroot in a large bowl. Dress with the lemon juice and toss. Cut the frittata into quarters – cool then chill half for tomorrow's lunch. Serve the rest warm with the salad on the side.

PER SERVING 332 kcals • protein 20g • carbs 29g • fat 16g • sat fat 6g • fibre 6g • sugar 25g • salt 1.1g

Day six



BREAKFAST

Rye bread with almond butter & pink grapefruit segments

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 2 mins

EASY V FIBRE

4 tbsp almond butter (see recipe, p36)
1 grapefruit (you will need about 100g flesh)
2 slices rye bread, toasted (optional)

1 Toast your rye bread, if you like. Segment the grapefruit and spoon the fruit, along with any juice, into a small bowl.
2 Spread the almond butter onto the rye bread, and top with the grapefruit, drizzling any juice over the top.

PER SERVING 333 kcals • protein 10g • carbs 30g • fat 18g • sat fat 2g • fibre 8g • sugar 7g • salt 0.8g



LUNCH

Slice of frittata with nutty green salad & balsamic dressing

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins
NO COOK EASY V
2 OF 5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

2 slices of frittata (from last night's dinner)
75g baby spinach
25g pine nuts (or hazelnuts)
FOR THE DRESSING
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
Juice ½ lemon
¼ tsp wholegrain mustard

1 In a small bowl, stir together the oil, vinegar, lemon juice and mustard.
2 Add the pine nuts to the dressing and mix them in. Fill a bowl with the salad leaves and mix through the dressing if eating now, or add just before you eat. Serve with the frittata.

PER SERVING 571 kcals • protein 20g • carbs 22g • fat 44g • sat fat 9g • fibre 4g • sugar 19g • salt 0.8g



DINNER

Cajun grilled chicken with lime black-eyed bean salad & guacamole

SERVES 2 **PREP** 15 mins plus marinating
COOK 10 mins EASY LOW CAL FIBRE VIT C 3 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

FOR THE CHICKEN BREAST
1 tsp rapeseed oil
½ tsp dried oregano
½ tsp dried thyme
1 tsp smoked or regular paprika
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts (each weighing 140g)
FOR THE BLACK-EYED BEAN SALAD
200g black-eyed beans from a can, drained (or butter or cannellini beans)
2 tomatoes, deseeded and diced
85g sweetcorn from a can, drained
2 spring onions, trimmed and finely chopped
25g semi-dried tomatoes in oil from a jar, roughly chopped
Zest and juice 1 lime
Small handful coriander, finely chopped
FOR THE GUACAMOLE
1 avocado, stoned and peeled
¼ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
½ tbsp olive oil
Juice 1 lime
Small handful coriander, finely chopped

1 Mix together the oil, herbs, spices and garlic in a large sealable bag. Put the chicken breasts in the bag and mix thoroughly to cover. Bash the chicken with a rolling pin to flatten it a little, then set aside to marinate for at least 15 mins.
2 In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients for the bean salad. Stir well and set aside.
3 For the guacamole, scoop the flesh from the avocado and put it in a medium bowl, chopping it roughly with the side of the spoon. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well. (If you prefer your guacamole to be smoother, mash the avocado well with the olive oil and lime juice until it's at your preferred consistency before stirring in the other ingredients.)
4 Heat the grill. Line a grill pan with foil, place the chicken breasts on it and grill for 5 mins, checking occasionally. Once golden brown, turn and grill for a further 5-7 mins. Check the middle of the breasts after 5 mins and, if cooked through, remove from the heat.
5 Set aside 2 chicken breasts and 2 tbsp guacamole for tomorrow's lunch and chill. Place 1 warm chicken breast on each plate, with some bean salad and a dollop of guacamole on the side.

PER SERVING 491 kcals • protein 48g • carbs 30g • fat 20g • sat fat 4g • fibre 12g • sugar 10g • salt 1.0g »

Day seven

BREAKFAST
Pistachio nut & spiced apple bircher muesli

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins plus overnight soaking
NO COOK EASY V LOW CAL FIBRE 1 OF 5 A DAY

FOR THE BASE INGREDIENTS
50g jumbo porridge oats
50ml apple juice
Large pinch each of cinnamon and nutmeg
1 medium apple, cored and grated
2 tbsp low-fat natural yoghurt

FOR THE TOPPING
25g pistachio nuts, chopped
3 tbsp pomegranate seeds or mixed berries

Mix all the base ingredients, except the yoghurt, with 150ml water and leave to soak for at least 20 mins or overnight, if possible. Once the oats have softened, stir through the yoghurt, then divide the mixture between 2 bowls. Sprinkle half of the topping over each bowl and serve.

PER SERVING 229 kcals • protein 8g • carbs 29g • fat 8g • sat fat 1g • fibre 5g • sugar 14g • salt 0.1g



LUNCH
Open rye sandwich with chicken & avocado

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **NO COOK**
EASY FIBRE 1 OF 5 A DAY

Divide **2 tbsp guacamole** (from last night's dinner) between **2 slices rye bread**, spreading it evenly. Arrange **4 slices of tomato** on each sandwich, and top with a sliced **Cajun grilled chicken breast** (from last night's dinner). Finish with a squeeze of lime and some ground black pepper.

PER SERVING 327 kcals • protein 27g • carbs 27g • fat 10g • sat fat 2g • fibre 9g • sugar 5g • salt 0.9g



DINNER
Chana masala with spinach

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 25 mins
EASY V LOW FAT LOW CAL CALCIUM FOLATE FIBRE VIT C 4 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU GLUTEN FREE

75g quick-cook brown basmati rice
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1cm piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped or grated
½ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
1 tsp each ground coriander, ground cumin, turmeric, paprika and garam masala
400g can whole plum tomatoes
400g can chickpeas, drained
Juice of ½ a lemon
220g bag baby spinach

1 Cook the rice following pack instructions. Meanwhile, heat a large non-stick pan or wok and dry-fry the cumin seeds for 1 min, stirring often, while they pop. Remove and set aside.
2 Using the same pan, heat the oil, add the onion, garlic, ginger and chilli, and sauté over a medium heat for about 3 mins. Reduce the heat, add all the spices, stir well and cook for a further 2 mins. Add the tomatoes, stirring, and use the side of a spoon to break them up into smaller bite-sized chunks. Add the chickpeas and 200ml water.
3 Bring to the boil, then simmer for 10 mins before stirring in the lemon juice and spinach. Let the spinach wilt, then remove the pan from the heat.
4 Divide the rice between 2 bowls, and serve the curry. (The flavours intensify as it cools, so for a fuller flavour, make earlier in the day and slowly reheat prior to serving.)

PER SERVING 420 kcals • protein 20g • carbs 60g • fat 12g • sat fat 1g • fibre 12g • sugar 12g • salt 1.3g

Day eight



BREAKFAST
Poached eggs with smoked salmon and bubble & squeak

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 15 mins

EASY | OMEGA-3 | GLUTEN FREE

300g whole new potatoes
1 tbsp rapeseed oil
140g white cabbage, finely chopped
2 spring onions, finely sliced
1 tbsp snipped chives
2 medium eggs, at room temperature
75g smoked salmon

1 Cook the potatoes in a pan of boiling water until tender, then drain.
2 Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan or wok. Sweat the cabbage and the spring onions in the pan for a couple of mins. Meanwhile, chop and squash the potatoes roughly, then add to the pan along with the chives. Cook for 4-5 mins, flip it over (don't worry if it breaks) and cook for a further 4-5 mins.
3 Meanwhile, bring a small pan of water to a rolling boil, then reduce the heat so it is just simmering. Crack the eggs into the pan and simmer for about 3 mins until the whites are cooked and the yolk is just beginning to set. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper.
4 To serve, divide the bubble & squeak between 2 plates, place the smoked salmon and poached eggs on top and grind over a little black pepper, to taste.

PER SERVING 310 kcals • protein 19g • carbs 29g • fat 13g • sat fat 2g • fibre 4g • sugar 5g • salt 2.0g

LUNCH
Crunchy mozzarella salad

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **NO COOK**

EASY | V | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | 3 OF 5 A DAY | GLUTEN FREE

100g lamb's lettuce or baby spinach leaves, or a mixture of both
½ cucumber, cut into ribbons using a vegetable peeler
100g semi-dried tomatoes in oil from a jar (reserve 1 tbsp oil for drizzling)
1 yellow pepper, deseeded and cut into thin strips
125g ball light buffalo mozzarella, cut into slices
2 tsp pumpkin seeds
2 tsp balsamic vinegar

1 Put the salad leaves, cucumber, semi-dried tomatoes and pepper in a large bowl and toss together. Divide the salad between 2 serving plates.
2 Divide the mozzarella equally between the plates, scatter with pumpkin seeds, and drizzle with balsamic vinegar and oil from the tomatoes.

PER SERVING 361 kcals • protein 22g • carbs 31g • fat 16g • sat fat 6g • fibre 10g • sugar 27g • salt 0.7g »



DINNER

Lemony chicken skewers, herbed new potatoes & apple coleslaw

SERVES 2 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY LOW FAT LOW CAL FOLATE VIT C 1 OF 5 A DAY GOOD 4 YOU

2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut into bite-sized cubes

FOR THE MARINADE

50ml low-fat natural yoghurt

Zest and juice of ½ lemon

1 garlic clove, crushed

1 tbsp tarragon, finely chopped

FOR THE HERBED NEW POTATOES

300g new potatoes

1 tbsp rapeseed oil

½ tbsp parsley, finely chopped

½ tbsp mint, finely chopped

½ tbsp snipped chives

FOR THE APPLE COLESLAW

100ml low-fat crème fraîche

1 tsp wholegrain mustard

Juice 1 lemon

100g fennel, trimmed and roughly grated

100g small white cabbage, cored and finely shredded

1 carrot, roughly grated

1 sharp green apple, such as Granny Smith, grated

1 If you are using wooden skewers, soak them in water for 10 mins to prevent them from burning. Heat the grill to high and place a non-stick baking tray beneath it. In a large bowl, mix the marinade ingredients, then add the chicken, turning it to ensure it is thoroughly coated. Cover and set aside.

2 Put the potatoes in a large pan of boiling water and cook until a fork easily pierces them – about 12 mins. Meanwhile, mix the oil and herbs in a small bowl.

3 While the potatoes are cooking, make the dressing for the coleslaw. Mix together the crème fraîche, mustard and lemon juice in a large bowl. Add all the vegetables and the apple, and stir well.

4 Drain the potatoes and return them to the pan. Pour the herb mixture over them, gently stir to mix, cover to keep warm and set aside.

5 Finally, divide the chicken between the 4 skewers and place on the hot baking tray, spooning excess marinade over the chicken. Put the tray under the grill and cook for 6-8 mins, turning the skewers every 2 mins or so to ensure even cooking. (Cut open a piece of chicken to ensure it's cooked through.) Serve with the potatoes and coleslaw, reserving half of the coleslaw for lunch tomorrow.

PER SERVING 413 kcals • protein 42g • carbs 35g • fat 12g • sat fat 4g • fibre 5g • sugar 10g • salt 0.4g

Day nine



BREAKFAST

Eggy spelt bread with orange cheese & raspberries

SERVES 2 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 5 mins

EASY V LOW CAL FIBRE

2 medium free-range eggs

2 tbsp orange juice

2 slices spelt bread, halved

50g low-fat cottage cheese

1 tsp orange zest

1 tsp rapeseed oil

50g raspberries

Clear honey, to serve (optional)

1 Beat the eggs and orange juice in a bowl wide enough to fit the bread in it. Soak the bread in the eggs and juice for 2 mins or so, turning halfway through.

2 Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix together the cheese and orange zest. Put the rapeseed oil in a non-stick frying pan over a high heat. When hot, add the eggy bread. Leave to cook for a couple of mins undisturbed, then flip and cook on the other side for another 1-2 mins.

3 Divide the bread between 2 plates, dollop the cheese on top, followed by the raspberries and honey, if you like.

PER SERVING 197 kcals • protein 14g • carbs 12g • fat 10g • sat fat 3g • fibre 2g • sugar 4g • salt 0.6g

LUNCH
Smoked mackerel pâté platter

SERVES 2 **PREP** 8 mins **NO COOK**
EASY FIBRE VIT C OMEGA-3 2 OF 5 A DAY

2 small smoked mackerel fillets (about 75g each), skin removed
3 tbsp low-fat natural yoghurt
Juice ½ lemon
TO SERVE
8 oatcakes
4 celery sticks, cut into batons
4 radishes
4 artichoke hearts from a jar, halved
apple coleslaw (from last night's dinner)

1 In a bowl, roughly mash the mackerel and add the yoghurt, lemon juice and some black pepper. Mash again until you have a chunky pâté. Put it in a bowl, ready to serve.
2 Arrange the other ingredients on a large serving platter, with the mackerel pâté alongside, and tuck in.

PER SERVING 581 kcals • protein 23g • carbs 35g • fat 29g • sat fat 10g • fibre 9g • sugar 11g • salt 3.0g





DINNER
Marinated grilled lamb cutlets with creamed corn

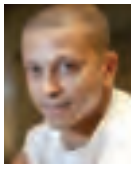
SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins plus marinating
COOK 25 mins EASY LOW CAL FIBRE VIT C 4 OF 5 A DAY

1 fennel bulb, cut into wedges
140g baby plum tomatoes, cut in half
FOR THE LAMB
Small bunch of rosemary, leaves only, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 tsp rapeseed oil
4 lamb cutlets, trimmed of any fat
FOR THE CREAMED CORN
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
½ red pepper, finely chopped
325g can sweetcorn, drained
1 tbsp low-fat crème fraîche

1 Put the rosemary, garlic and rapeseed oil in a small bowl, then mash together to release the flavours. Smear over the lamb cutlets, place in a bowl or sealable food bag and leave to marinate.
2 For the corn, heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan, add the onion and sauté until softened, about 3 mins. Add the red pepper and stir to coat in the onion mixture. Add a splash of cold water, then cover until the pepper is soft, about 5 mins.
3 Put the mixture into a food processor bowl with the sweetcorn and crème fraîche. Blitz until combined and fairly smooth. Return to the heat in a pan and warm to serve.
4 Heat a griddle pan. Place the lamb cutlets in the pan and cook until pink or as cooked as you like them. Once cooked, remove from the pan and cover with foil to keep warm. Place the fennel wedges in the griddle pan and griddle until cooked and marked with char lines. Add the tomatoes for the last few mins of cooking. Eat as soon as the lamb is cooked to your liking.

PER SERVING 408 kcals • protein 22g • carbs 36g • fat 20g • sat fat 6g • fibre 8g • sugar 18g • salt 0.9g GI

Seafood surprise



Enjoy exotic seafood, and lots more, at the new themed nights at Shangri La Dubai's Dune's Café. Chef Harry Hewagamage shares one of the signature recipes to give you a taste of what to expect!



Sri Lankan mud crab curry with tamarind

SERVES 4 | PREP 30 MINS | COOK 15 MINS

INGREDIENTS

2kg live mud crab (500g-600g each)
50ml corn oil
1 tsp mustard seeds
15g red onion, chopped
15g garlic, chopped
1 tsp ginger, chopped
5g curry leaves
2 tsp Madras curry powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp chilli powder
60g seedless tamarind soaked in water
1l fish stock
10g raw brown sugar
10g corn starch
Salt and pepper

1 Blanch the crab for 12 mins, then put it in ice water to stop further cooking. Remove main shell and clean all gills, then cut in half and crack claws

2 Heat up corn oil in a medium sized pot until very hot, add mustard seeds and allow them to pop. Sauté the garlic, onion and ginger until golden brown. Add all the spices and seasoning, and cook for 1 min. Add the tamarind water and boil for 3 mins. Add the fish stock and boil for 5 more mins.

3 Dissolve corn starch in water, add to the curry and cook till a gravy consistency is achieved.

4 Add the cleaned crab, toss well and cover the pan with a lid for 2 mins.

5 To serve, spoon the crab into a bowl, pour generous amount of gravy on top and serve with steamed rice.

Theme night delights

The lowdown on the exciting new weeknight promotions at Dunes Café:

• CRAB-TASTIC
This Wednesday night dinner buffet features a variety of different crustaceans, such as Sri Lankan mud crab, Alaskan king crab, Devon, and local blue crab, cooked in different styles, from Singaporean-style with chilli and egg to chilled soups and salads.

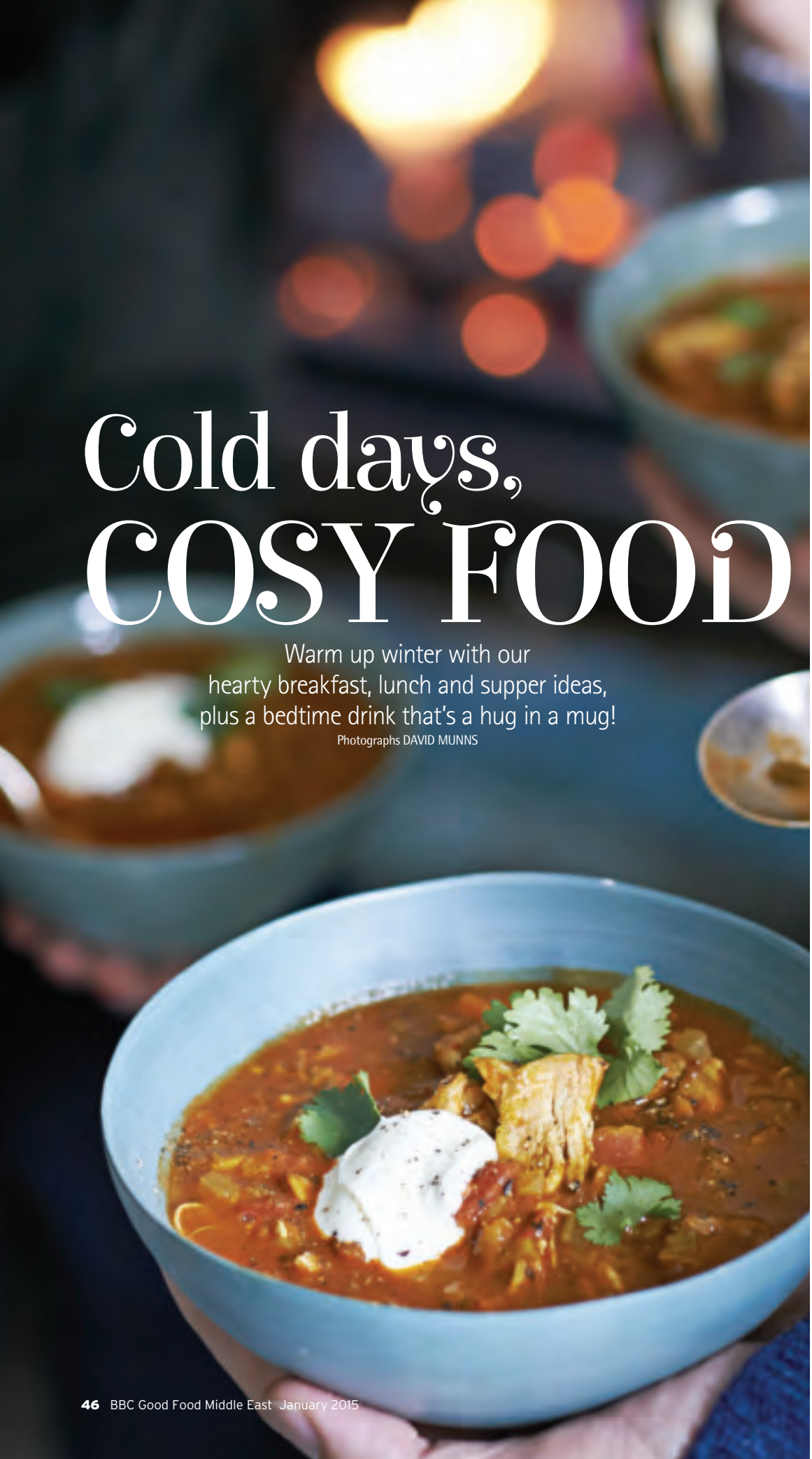
• LOBSTER-LICIOUS
Indulge in grilled, chilled, curried lobster meat, as well as other delicacies including oysters, sashimi and grilled meats at this Thursday night buffet spread featuring live cooking stations.

• THE BUTCHER'S BLOCK
Premium steaks, gourmet burgers, sausages, veal and lamb chops, chicken, turkey, duck – everything meat you can imagine is on offer every Tuesday evening. The meat treats are accompanied by a wide variety of sides too.

Prices start from Dhs235 per person for all three theme nights, call 04-4052703 to book.

فندق شانغريلا دبي
Shangri-La hotel
DUBAI


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Cold days, COSY FOOD

Warm up winter with our hearty breakfast, lunch and supper ideas, plus a bedtime drink that's a hug in a mug!

Photographs DAVID MUNNS

Moroccan harira & chicken soup

SERVES 4-5 ● **PREP** 20 mins ● **COOK** 1 hr

EASY | LOW CAL | FOLATE | FIBRE | VIT C | IRON | 2 OF 5 A DAY

3 tbsp olive oil, plus extra to drizzle
4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
1 leek, washed and finely sliced
4 fat celery sticks, chopped into small pieces
3 large carrots, chopped into small pieces
2 big parsnips, peeled and chopped into small pieces
Handful of coriander, stalks finely chopped, leaves reserved to serve
1 tbsp cumin seeds
2 tsp each ground cumin, coriander, cinnamon and turmeric
2 tbsp harissa
800g canned chopped tomatoes
2 chicken stock cubes, crumbled
85g raw green lentils
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 tbsp golden caster sugar
Natural yoghurt, toast and hummous, to serve

1 Heat half the oil in a frying pan, season the thighs and brown really well on both sides. Remove to a plate. Tip a mug of water into the pan and simmer, scraping up all the browned bits. Tip this liquid into a measuring jug for later.

2 Put the remaining oil, the vegetables and coriander stalks in a big saucepan. Gently cook until the veg is softened – about 5 mins. Stir in the spices, turn up the heat, and cook for a few mins. Stir in the harissa, followed by the tomatoes, the chicken, stock cubes and lentils. Top up your jug of chickeny juices to 500ml with water, then add this, too. Bring to a simmer, cover and cook for 30 mins.

3 Lift the chicken from the soup and shred finely using a couple of forks. Return to the soup with the lemon zest and juice, sugar, and season to taste. Ladle into bowls with a dollop of yoghurt and the coriander leaves, and serve with toast, spread with hummous and drizzled with oil.

PER SERVING (5) 316 kcals • protein 22g • carbs 28g • fat 14g • sat fat 3g • fibre 7g • sugar 17g • salt 1.6g



A luxury bowl of oats for a breakfast boost

Spiced coconut porridge with cranberry & orange compote

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 20 mins

EASY V CALCIUM FIBRE VIT C 1OF5 A DAY

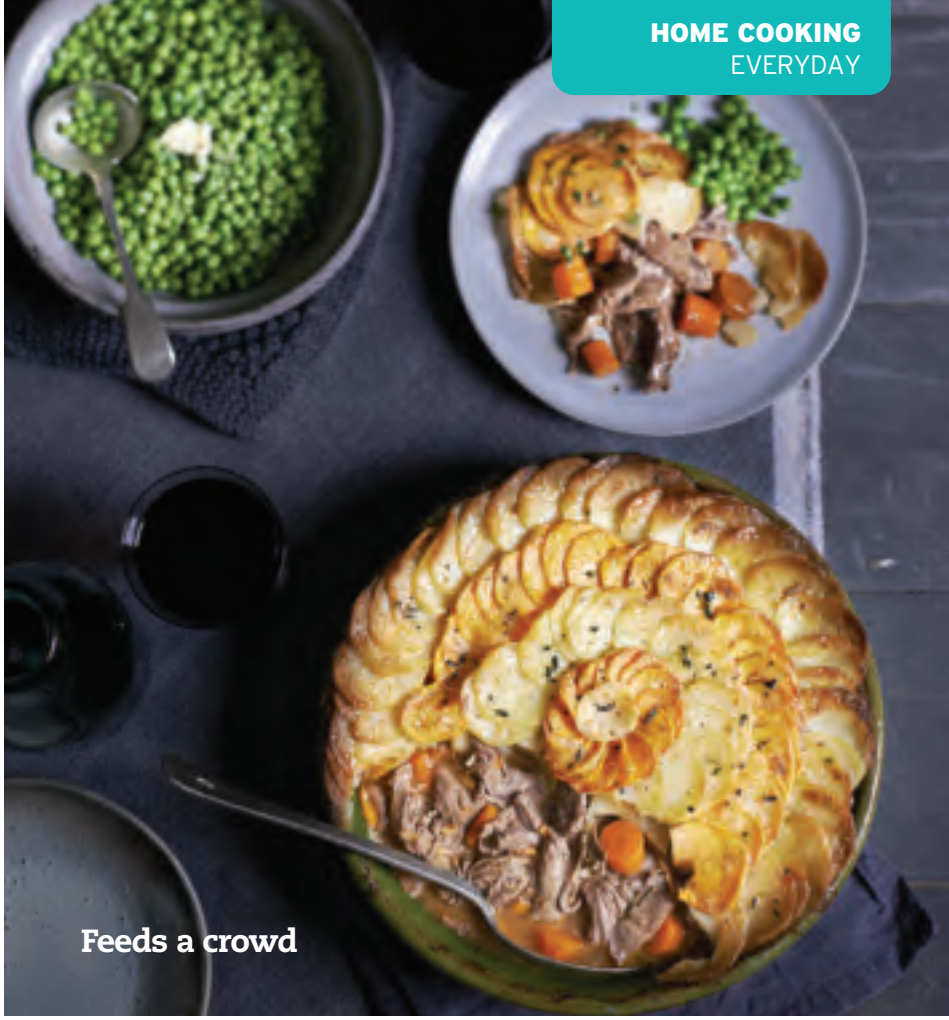
175g porridge oats
700ml milk
400ml can low-fat coconut milk
3 tbsp soft light brown sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon
good grating of nutmeg, plus extra to serve
160ml can coconut cream, plus shaved toasted coconut, to serve
FOR THE COMPOTE
3 tbsp light brown soft sugar
3 oranges, peeled and sliced
250g fresh or frozen cranberries

1 Mix the oats, milk, coconut milk, sugar, spices and a pinch of salt in a saucepan. Set over a low heat and cook for about 20 mins, stirring every now and then to prevent the porridge from sticking, until it's thick and creamy – add a splash more milk if you like it thinner.

2 Meanwhile, prepare the compote. Put the sugar and 2 tbsp water in a frying pan and heat to dissolve the sugar. Once bubbling, add the oranges and cranberries. Stir, then turn up the heat and leave to bubble for a few mins until most of the liquid evaporates and the compote becomes thick and sticky.

3 To serve, spoon the porridge into bowls, top with the orange & cranberry compote, a swirl of coconut cream, some shaved coconut and an extra grating of nutmeg.

PER SERVING 469 kcals • protein 15g • carbs 73g • fat 13g • sat fat 8g • fibre 7g • sugar 47g • salt 0.3g



Feeds a crowd

Lamb & Dauphinoise hotpot

SERVES 8 **PREP** 15 mins plus overnight chilling
COOK 4 hrs 10 mins

EASY IRON 1OF5 A DAY GLUTEN FREE

3 large carrots, cut into large chunks
1 onion, roughly chopped
1 garlic bulb, split in 2
Few sprigs each of rosemary and thyme
2 bay leaves
1 tbsp tomato purée
1 shoulder of lamb on the bone, about 2.5kg
1 bottle red wine
FOR THE TOPPING
4-5 potatoes and 4 sweet potatoes (the roundest you have)
150ml double cream
Few knobs of butter

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. In a flameproof casserole dish that is large enough to fit the lamb, snugly scatter over all the vegetables and herbs, and roughly stir in the tomato purée. Sit the lamb on top, pour over the bottle of wine and season generously. Cover the dish and heat up on top of the stove, then put in the oven and leave undisturbed for 3 hrs. Remove from the oven, leave to cool, then chill overnight.

2 The next day, remove all the hard fat from around the lamb and discard. Lift the lamb out of the dish, scraping away and keeping any of the jellified juices. Pull apart and shred the meat, discarding any large pieces of fat and the bones. Put the lamb back in the dish, then spoon over the jellied sauce and mix with the vegetables. Set aside.

3 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. To make the topping, peel and neatly slice the potatoes by hand into rounds. Place in a pan of cold, salted water, bring to a hard boil and drain straight away. Tip back into the pan, pour over the cream and season. Now it's up to you how fancy you want to be – you can pile the potatoes over the lamb casually, or you can arrange the potato and sweet potato in interleaving circles. Drizzle over any remaining cream from the pan and dot with butter. Bake for 40 mins-1 hr until the top is golden and the sauce is just starting to bubble.

PER SERVING 645 kcals • protein 49g • carbs 24g • fat 32g • sat fat 17g • fibre 4g • sugar 9g • salt 0.6g »

Beef Wellington with spinach & bacon

SERVES 6 ● **PREP** 25 mins plus freezing and 1 hr chilling ● **COOK** up to 55 mins

MORE OF A CHALLENGE P IRON

700-800g beef fillet, cut from the centre of the fillet so that it's all the same size
Large knob of butter
1 tbsp sunflower oil
500g spinach
12 thin slices smoked pancetta, or rindless streaky bacon (can be swapped for turkey bacon)
Plain flour, for dusting
500g pack all-butter puff pastry
2 egg yolks
FOR THE GRAVY
Knob of butter
1 shallot, finely chopped
Thyme sprig
1 bay leaf
1 tbsp plain flour
Glass of red wine
1 beef stock cube

1 Pat the beef fillet with kitchen paper to remove any blood, then season. Heat the butter and oil in a large frying pan until very hot, then sear and turn the fillet with tongs for 8-10 mins until it's well browned on all sides - hold it up to sear both ends, too. Set the beef aside on a tray to catch any juices. Take the pan off the heat, but don't clean it.

2 Tip the spinach into a colander and pour over a kettle of boiling water to wilt it, then pour over cold water to cool it down. Squeeze the spinach as hard as you can to extract as much liquid as possible, then set aside. Lay a large sheet of cling film on your work surface. Overlap the pancetta or bacon on it in a row, then cover with another sheet of cling film. Use a rolling pin to roll it out to a thin layer. Remove the top sheet of cling film and scatter the spinach over the pancetta. Replace the cling film and roll again. Carefully peel away the top layer of cling film again, and sit the beef on top. Using the edge of the cling film, lift and roll the pancetta and spinach to encase the beef and roll everything into a tight sausage. For best results, place in the freezer for 30 mins to firm up – do not leave for longer or cooking times will be affected.

3 On a lightly floured surface, roll the pastry to a rectangle a little larger than 30 cm. Trim the edges to neaten, then lightly brush the pastry with egg yolk. Carefully unwrap the beef parcel and lay in the middle of the pastry. Fold the shorter edges over the beef, then roll the whole thing around the fillet to encase. For a really neat finish, get another clean sheet of cling film and roll the Wellington into a tight sausage again. Chill for at least 30 mins, or up to 1 day.

4 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan and put a lightly oiled baking tray in it. Unwrap the Wellington, brush with egg yolk, then use the back of a knife to score a neat criss-cross or checkerboard pattern all over it. Sprinkle with flaky sea salt and transfer, sealed-side down, to the hot baking tray. Roast for 10 mins, then reduce the oven to 200C/180C fan and continue to cook for 25 mins for rare meat, 30 mins for medium rare, 35 mins for medium, and about 45 mins for well done, making sure the pastry doesn't burn (cover it with foil if it starts to darken). Remove from the oven and immediately brush with more egg yolk. Leave to rest for 10 mins.

5 To make the gravy, heat the butter in the beef pan. Fry the shallot, thyme and bay leaf, scraping the crispy bits off the pan with a wooden spoon. Scatter over the flour and brown, then add the red wine and boil to a purple paste. Add the beef stock cube and any juice from the resting beef, and simmer for 5 mins. Pass through a sieve into a pan and season to taste. Use a sharp knife to carve the Wellington into 6 thick slices and serve with the gravy on the side.

PER SERVING 628 kcals • protein 36g • carbs 33g • fat 38g • sat fat 17g • fibre 2g • sugar 2g • salt 1.9g

Rich show-off dish

Chocolate gingerbread brownie bars with fudgy icing

CUTS INTO 15 bars **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 35 mins
A LITTLE EFFORT ❄ un-iced

400g dark chocolate, broken into chunks
25g cocoa powder
250g golden caster sugar
250g butter
1 tbsp ground ginger
140g ground almonds
6 large eggs, separated
FOR THE ICING
100g butter, cubed
50g dark chocolate - use a bar broken into pieces, or chips
50g cocoa
200g icing sugar, sifted
2 tbsp ground ginger
Few chunks of crystallised ginger, chopped into small pieces

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Grease a 20 x 30cm cake tin, and line the base and sides with baking parchment. Melt the chocolate, cocoa, sugar and butter together in a saucepan over a very low heat. Once the chocolate and butter have melted and sugar dissolved, remove from the heat and stir in the ginger and almonds, followed by the egg yolks, one at a time.
2 Beat the egg whites to stiff peaks. Using a metal spoon, stir a couple of spoonfuls of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture to loosen before very gently folding in the rest.
3 Gently scrape into the tin. Bake for 30-35 mins until the top looks set and the centre doesn't wobble too much. Sit the cake tin on a wire rack and leave to cool completely.
4 Once cool, make the icing. Put the butter, chocolate, cocoa, icing sugar, ground ginger and 4 tbsp water in a pan. Gently heat, stirring, until you have a smooth icing. Pour over the cake (still in its tin), leave for 1-2 mins to cool slightly, then scatter over the ginger. Cool completely (you can also store in the fridge if you bring out to room temperature about 20 mins before serving) before cutting into bars.

PER BAR 553 kcals • protein 7g • carbs 51g • fat 36g • sat fat 19g • fibre 2g • sugar 49g • salt 0.6g

Make plenty – these are so good



Drift off dreaming of coconut tree-lined beaches...

Warm 500ml semi-skimmed milk to just under boiling point in a small pan. Whisk 2 tbsp Ovaltine with 2 tbsp Malibu until dissolved (use a milk frother if you have one), in your two favourite mugs, top up with the hot milk and enjoy.

PER MUG 220 kcals • protein 10g • carbs 27g • fat 5g • sat fat 3g • fibre 1g • sugar 20g • salt 0.3g 3!

Liquid flavours

Dubai's award-winning restaurant and lounge Rang Mahal by Atul Kochhar not only serves up delicious cuisine, but also an array of tempting Indian-inspired cocktails and mocktails at its stylish lounge area. Here are two cocktail recipes from the expert mixologists you can toss up to impress your guests.

Punch

SERVES 1

Combine **30ml dark rum**, **15ml orange curacao**, **15ml Pimento liqueur**, **45ml fresh orange juice**, **20ml lime juice**, **10ml simple syrup** and shake well. Double strain over **crushed ice**, sprinkle grated **nutmeg** on top and garnish with **cinnamon stick**. Drop **2 dashes of Angostura bitters** on top before serving.



Named after the hindi word 'paanch' which means five, this drink has five essential ingredients - water, sugar, something sour, something bitter, and something alcoholic. Over the years, the drink has evolved with colonial influences, to become the rum-based fruit-infused concoction it is today!

Bourbon Affair

(SERVES 1)



Coat a glass with **melted chocolate** and **gold leaf** (optional). Mix **45ml aged bourbon**, **15ml plum liqueur**, **20ml lime juice**, **10ml sugar syrup** and a dash of **Angostura bitters** in a cocktail shaker and shake vigorously. Pour the drink over an ice ball, garnish with a chocolate stick and serve.



Rang Mahal lounge is a stylish, atmospheric venue with spice-inspired colour scheme, mood lighting, and plenty of seating options, both for large gatherings, as well as private nooks. The modern interiors are complemented with pulsing music, every evening from 6pm to 1am. Their special offers are perfect for sampling more of their exotic drinks and bar bites:

- **After Hours** offers 1 bar snack and 2 signature cocktails for Dhs99.
- **Catching up** offers 1 bar snack and 2 beers for Dhs69.
- **Chin Chin** offers 1 bar snack and 2 glasses of white or red house wine for Dhs89.

For reservations, call 04-4143000.

Rang Mahal
by Atul Kochhar

Kitchen notes

Nutrition advice, cooking tips and product picks for your pantry.



Reader tip of the month

To thicken a soup, add a spoon of lentils or barley, and mix it well.

- Mafaza Haleem

Got a great tip you want to share?
Get in touch with us on facebook or twitter

Going organic in the capital





Abu Dhabi residents are in for a treat, with the launch of Organic Foods and Café at Nation Towers Galleria. Pioneers of the organic movement in the UAE, the store sells everything from fresh organic and biodynamic produce, to bakery items, supplements, gluten-free food, cleaning products, and fresh meat from the butchery section. The store also has a café which boasts gorgeous views of the Corniche, and serves dishes made with organic ingredients. Call 056-2108277.

SMART FOOD SWAPS



356 calories
2 slices of French toast with butter

Swap for



280 calories
2 low-fat, Nutri-Grain waffles

or



152 calories
1 (70g) potato cake with 1 tbsp sour cream

or



182 calories
A Spanish omelette (150g)



CUT BACK ON SALT

US$60 billion is the value of the amount of food wastage that occurs in the MENA region annually, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Orginisation (FAO). About 40 per cent of it is from Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

According to The World Health Organization (WHO), you should have a maximum of 2 grams of sodium per day and the current worldwide average intake is 3.95 grams per day! To make sure you avoid adding too much salt to a dish, season it only towards the end, instead of through the cooking process. Also, make sure to cut back on salty foods like chips. Salt can also be in hidden forms in many packaged foods, so make sure to check the ingredients label properly.

Health update> EAT TO BEAT CERVICAL CANCER



January is Cervical Cancer Health Awareness month. To protect yourself, and the women in your life, it's important to include the right food in your diet. Flavonoid-rich food like apples, asparagus, cabbage, cranberries, broccoli, black beans, garlic and onions, to name a few, help protect against this cancer. Carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, and winter squash – foods rich in carotenoids – also protects against cancer.

Look what we found! 3 great new products for your kitchen



This Gefu Spiral slicer spirelli allows you to make zucchini and carrot noodles in minutes! Dhs95 at Tavola.



These Vege crackers in French onion flavour are gluten-free – perfect for snacking on with hummous or a cheese dip. Dhs7.50 from glutenfree-supermarket.ae.



New health drink Vita Coco is made of 100% natural coconut water. Rich in electrolytes and potassium, it comes in natural as well as fruity flavours such as peach and mango. Dhs9.50 at all leading supermarkets.

Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SUPPLIED; SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Chef skills

Learn to: Make sushi



Sushi rolls are easier to make than you think. Teerapan Rinthaisong, head chef of Sumo Sushi and Bento, shows how, as well as shares a modern sushi recipe. Master the technique, then you can get creative with the fillings! Photographs ANAS CHERUR



Japanese chef Teerapan Rinthaisong, also known as Chef Tako, began his career as a sushi chef about 20 years ago. He gained his culinary experience at Sushi Tsukiji in Japan – where he worked for eight years – before joining Sumo Sushi and Bento in Dubai, in 2000.

Alaskan roll

MAKES 4 rolls **PREP** 20mins, 1 hr chilling for the sauce
COOK 20 mins **EASY**

400g sushi rice
45ml rice vinegar
2 sheets of seaweed (8x12cm), cut in half
60g tobiko (fish roe)
20g mayonnaise
100g smoked salmon, thinly sliced
60g avocado, sliced
60g store-bought crab sticks, cut in half, lengthwise
FOR THE SPICY SAUCE
500g mayonnaise
50g tongarashi spice mix
3 tbsp Tabasco
FOR THE TEMPURA BATTER
1kg of tempurako flour
700ml water
500ml vegetable oil, for frying
YOU WILL NEED
A bamboo mat covered in clingfilm

1 Boil the rice for 20 mins and set aside to cool. Mix the rice vinegar in and set aside (Step 1).
2 Mix the sauce ingredients together and chill for 1 hr.
3 Place the seaweed sheet onto a bamboo mat and add the rice on top (Step 2). Cover the entire seaweed sheet with the rice (Step 3) and spread the tobiko all over (Step 4).
4 Carefully turn the seaweed sheet over, and add the mayonnaise (step 5). Place the smoked salmon, avocado and crab sticks (Step 6)
5 Roll the bamboo mat over and press firmly (Step 7). Roll again and then take out the bamboo mat (Step 8).
6 Cut in half, and then cut again to make six pieces (Step 9).
7 To make the tempura, mix the tempurako with water. Heat the oil, sprinkle the batter into it and fry for 1-2 mins, until crispy. Place the tempura on a kitchen towel.
8 Sprinkle the tempura bits over the sushi roll, and drizzle the spicy sauce all over. Serve the roll with wasabi and ginger.

PER SERVING 530 kcals • protein 34g • carbs 34g • fat 27g • sat fat 9g • fibre 5g • sugar 11g • salt 1.7g

Text and styling by NICOLA MONTEATH



Mix the vinegar with the rice to make a sticky mixture.



Take a handful of the rice mixture and make a flat round ball, about the size of a tennis ball.



Carefully place the round ball of rice down on the seaweed sheet, and spread out lengthwise, then flatten all over to cover the seaweed.



Spread the tobiko on top.



Turn the seaweed sheet over – the rice sticks to it, so it won't fall off – and add the mayonnaise in a line along the centre.



Add the smoked salmon, crab sticks and avocado over the mayonnaise.



Roll the bamboo mat, starting from the end that's closest to you, so that the rice sheet covers the crab and avocado filling.



Press the roll firmly with both hands, and roll again away from you so becomes completely covered by the mat. Remove the bamboo mat carefully (it shouldn't stick to the roll).

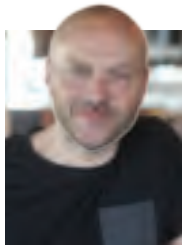


Carefully cut the sushi roll with a sharp knife, to make six pieces.

Best of British



British classics using seasonal produce is given an innovative twist in these recipes from Scene, the latest venture of celebrity chef Simon Rimmer. Serve up this restaurant-style menu at your next dinner party! Photographs ANAS CHERUR



Liverpool-born Simon Rimmer is a self-trained chef who opened his first restaurant, Greens, in 1990. His second venture in Hale was called Earle by Simon Rimmer, where he built up a celebrity clientele. He is also a well-known TV personality and cookbook author, and opened his first overseas venture, Scene at Pier 7, Dubai, in 2014. Here he shares a dinner party menu of British classics highlighting seasonal ingredients, that are fuss-free but delicious.

'The acidity in the red cabbage works well with the crisp rissoles in this dish.'

Corned beef rissoles with pickled red cabbage

SERVES 4 **PREP** 45 mins **COOK** 1 hr 30 mins **EASY**

400g diced corned beef
600g mashed potato
200g cooked carrots, grated
A pinch of salt
A pinch of pepper
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
16 tbsp wholemeal flour
8 tbsp brown sauce
8g parsley, chopped
20g all-purpose flour
2 eggs, beaten
50g bread crumbs
A few sprigs of shiso cress leaves
1l oil

FOR THE PICKLED RED CABBAGE
200g red cabbage
20g white onions
A pinch of rosemary
15ml olive oil
Salt and pepper
1-2 juniper berries
75ml raspberry vinegar

1 Mix together the corned beef, mashed potato, carrot, salt and pepper, garlic cloves, wholemeal flour, brown sauce and chopped parsley. Roll into meat balls of about 100g each, and refrigerate for 20 mins.

2 Once chilled, roll into the flour until covered completely. Place the mixture into the beaten egg and roll in breadcrumbs. Deep fry until golden brown.

3 Finely slice the red cabbage and white onions, and place in the pan with all the other ingredients – except the vinegar. When partly cooked, add the vinegar and continue to cook until soft. Season and place on a plate, with the rissoles on top. Garnish with shiso cress leaves and serve.

PER SERVING 780 kcals • protein 33g • carbs 82g • fat 38g • sat fat 7.5g • fibre 11g • sugar 13g • salt 4.1g

Text and styling NICOLA MONTEATH | Props from DAISO and CRATE & BARREL

Cured salmon with soda bread and roasted beetroot

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30 mins **COOK** 60 MINS

A LITTLE EFFORT

250g raw salmon
150g coarse salt
75g sugar
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
20g dill, chopped
20g chervil, chopped
3g English mustard
FOR THE TEXTURED GARNISH
1 egg, hard-boiled
1 medium shallot, finely diced
5g parsley, finely chopped
60g sour cream
FOR THE SODA BREAD
300g wholemeal flour
32g oats
1 ½ tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
1 ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
200g laban
200ml milk
50g black treacle
50ml golden syrup
FOR THE ROASTED BEETROOT
300g raw heritage beetroot (in different colours)
A pinch of salt and pepper
A drizzle of olive oil

1 Mix the salt, sugar and lemon together. Place the salmon skin side down in a deep tray and cover with the salt mixture. Wrap with cling film and chill for 24 hrs. Wash off the salt and sugar gently and dry well. Gently skin the salmon, removing any excess fat, and lightly brush with the mustard and roll into the herbs. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

2 Separate the egg yolk from the white and finely chop each. Chill the shallots, eggs and parsley until ready to serve.

3 Mix all the dry soda bread ingredients in a bowl, and the wet ingredients in a pan, warming it slightly. Mix the two together and tip into a greased loaf tin. Bake at 160C for 50 mins.

4 Wrap the beetroot in foil with salt and olive oil. Place in a baking tray with water. Roast at 180C for 60-90 mins; depending on the size. Once cooked, peel, dice and season with salt, pepper and olive oil.

5 Place the cured salmon on a plate, with the beetroot cubes, chopped eggs and parsley, and soda bread slices. Quenelle the sour cream onto the plate and serve.

PER SERVING 600 kcals • protein 26.5g • carbs 76g • fat 20g • sat fat 5.5g • fibre 11.5g • sugar 28.5g • salt 3g »



Lancashire cheese sausage, grain mustard mash and side of veggie gravy

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30 mins **COOK** 25 mins EASY

270g Lancashire cheese, crumbled
170g mozzarella, grated
4 spring onions, finely sliced
½ tbsp of thyme, basil and parsley (each), finely chopped
2 whole eggs
2 egg yolks
1 garlic clove, crushed
A pinch of salt and pepper, to taste
1l oil, for deepfrying
FOR THE GRAIN MUSTARD MASH
400g potatoes, peeled
40g wholegrain mustard
150g butter
A pinch of salt and pepper, to taste
FOR THE GRAVY
2 onions, peeled and sliced
2 garlic cloves
5ml oil, for frying
10g brown sugar
60g plain flour
500ml vegetable stock
A pinch of salt and pepper, to taste
FOR THE ONION RINGS
1 white onion
100ml soda water
50g all-purpose flour
A pinch of salt and pepper to taste
1l oil, for deep-frying
Parsley cress, for garnish

1 Place all the cheese sausage ingredients in a large bowl and mix for 5 mins with your hands to get a firm texture. Divide into 8 portions and mould into sausage shapes. Refrigerate for at least 2 hrs, and then deep fry in hot oil at 160C for 3 mins, until golden brown. Drain on a kitchen roll.
2 To make the gravy, fry the onions and garlic in oil and sugar until golden brown. Over a low heat, sprinkle in the flour and cook for around 3-4 mins. Once the flour is cooked, add the stock and gravy browning, and boil for around 20 mins.
3 Make the mash by boiling the potatoes in salted water. Drain and place back in the pan. Season and mash until smooth, beating in the butter and mustard.
4 Whisk together the soda water and flour.
5 Slice the onion to rings and dust in the batter mix. Fry for around 3-4 mins to make it golden brown in colour.
6 Place the cheese sausages on a plate with the onion rings on top. Serve with the mash and gravy on the side and garnish with the parsley cress.

PER SERVING 1,112 kcals • protein 37g • carbs 51g • fat 88g • sat fat 41g • fibre 5g • sugar 8.8g • salt 4g



"I love the texture of this sticky pudding with little pockets of apple in between!"

Sticky toffee apple pudding

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30 mins **COOK** 45 mins EASY

124g soft butter
222g apples peeled, cored and chopped
45ml water
66g caster sugar
155g light soft brown sugar
2 tbsp golden syrup
½ vanilla pod
2 eggs
177g self-raising flour
½ tsp bicarbonate soda
66g chopped dates, soaked in 30ml coffee
1 apple dipped in caramel (Available at Waitrose and Spinneys)
4 scoops of vanilla ice cream, to serve
A drizzle of caramel sauce

1 Preheat the oven at 175C.
2 In a pan, melt 30g of butter and add the apples, water and sugar. Cook over a gentle heat for 5 mins and set aside to cool a little.
3 Beat the butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Add the golden syrup, eggs and vanilla and mix until well combined. Fold the flour into this cake mix.
4 Add the bicarbonate of soda to the apples, and quickly stir into the cake mix. Fold in the soaked dates and place in a dish lined with greaseproof paper. Bake for around 45 mins and place a skewer into the cake to check if it's cooked – it should come out clean. Leave aside to chill and portion.
5 Serve with a scoop of vanilla ice cream and a mini apple, with the caramel drizzled all over.

PER SERVING 815 kcals • protein 9.3g • carbs 131g • fat 30g • sat fat 18.5g • fibre 4g • sugar 103g • salt 0.4g


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Lighter puds

No need to miss out on a sweet treat at the end of a meal, with these better-for-you recipes.



Divinely chocolatey, low fat and delicious

Chocolate sponge with hot chocolate custard

SERVES 12 **PREP** 30 mins plus soaking
COOK 40 mins EASY LOW FAT

300g stoned dates, chopped
6 large eggs, separated
350g light muscovado sugar
200g wholemeal flour
2 tsp baking powder
100g cocoa
FOR THE CUSTARD
5 tbsp custard powder
5 tbsp light muscovado sugar
50g cocoa powder
1.2 litres skimmed milk

1 Cover the dates with boiling water and set aside to soften for 30 mins.
2 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan and line a 20 x 30cm baking tin with baking parchment. Drain the dates, reserving the liquid, then whizz the dates to a purée with 100ml of soaking liquid.
3 Beat the egg whites in a large bowl with an electric whisk to stiff peaks. Add half the sugar and beat until thick and glossy.
4 In another bowl, beat the yolks and remaining sugar until pale. Whisk in the date mixture, then fold into the egg whites until well combined. Mix the flour, baking powder and cocoa with a pinch of salt. Sprinkle over the wet mixture and very gently fold in until well combined. Scrape into the tin. Bake for 35-40 mins until a skewer poked in comes out clean.
5 Mix the custard powder, sugar and cocoa together in a pan. Stir in dribbles of milk to make a smooth paste. Slowly add more milk until incorporated with no lumps. Warm over a medium heat, stirring constantly, until thick and just bubbling.
6 Cut the warm cake into slabs and pour over the hot chocolate custard to serve.

PER SERVING 401 kcals • protein 12g • carbs 75g • fat 6g • sat fat 3g • fibre 5g • sugar 58g • salt 0.8g

Peach crumble

SERVES 6 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 35 mins

EASY LOW FAT LOW CAL 2 OF 5 A DAY

1230g canned peach slices in juice
Zest of 1 lemon, plus juice ½
2 tbsp agave syrup
140g plain flour
50g porridge oats
25g cold butter, grated

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Drain the peaches, but reserve the juice. Tip the peaches into a deep baking dish, roughly 20 x 30cm. Scatter over the lemon zest and juice and 1 tbsp of the agave, then toss everything together.

2 In a bowl, combine the flour, oats, butter, remaining agave and 4 tbsp of the reserved peach juice. Mix together, first with a spoon, then with your fingers, until you have a rough breadcrumb-like mixture. Scatter over the peaches, then bake for 35 mins until golden and crunchy on top.

PER SERVING 202 kcals • protein 4g • carbs 36g • fat 4g • sat fat 2g • fibre 3g • sugar 14g • salt 0.1g >>

Adds to your five a day





Superhealthy fruity pud

Nectarine & pistachio crunch layers

SERVES 6 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 8 mins

EASY VIT C LOW FAT 1 OF 5 A DAY

50g fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs
25g porridge oats
50g demerara sugar
25g shelled pistachios, finely chopped
500g pot fresh low-fat custard
500g pot 0% fat Greek yoghurt
2 tbsp maple syrup or Greek honey
4 ripe nectarines, stoned, thinly sliced

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Mix breadcrumbs, oats, sugar and pistachios and spread out in an even layer on a lined baking tray. Bake for 8 mins, stirring halfway, until crisp and golden brown. Cool.
2 Gradually beat the custard into the yoghurt in a mixing bowl. Sweeten with the syrup or honey. Layer the pistachio crumbs, nectarines and custard in serving glasses.

PER SERVING 252 kcals • protein 15g • carbs 42g • fat 4g • sat fat 1g • fibre 2g • sugar 31g • salt 0.35g

Frozen banana yoghurt

SERVES 8 **PREP** 20 mins plus freezing
NO COOK EASY GLUTEN FREE

4 overripe bananas - the blacker the better - about 375g after peeling
500g pot full-fat Greek yoghurt
175g condensed milk
Big handful of banana chips (optional)

1 Whizz the flesh from the bananas, yoghurt and condensed milk together in a food processor or blender until smooth. Scrape into an ice-cream container or loaf tin, or divide between individual serving pots.
2 Crush up the banana chips, if using, by tipping them into a food bag and bashing with the end of a rolling pin – like you would biscuits for a cheesecake base. Swirl through the yoghurt mix, then cover the container or containers well with cling film and freeze overnight until solid. Will keep for 3 months in the freezer.

PER SERVING 200 kcals • protein 6g • carbs 25g • fat 9g • sat fat 6g • fibre 1g • sugar 24g • salt 0.2g

Gluten-free no-churn ice cream



Low-fat pud to whip out of the freezer

Easy gooseberry cobbler

SERVES 6 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 30 mins
EASY LOW FAT after baking

750g gooseberries, washed, topped and tailed
100g caster sugar
1 tsp grated root ginger
3 tbsp elderflower cordial
FOR THE TOPPING
140g plain flour
2 tsp baking powder
25g butter
25g caster sugar
150ml buttermilk
1 tbsp demerara sugar

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan. Place the gooseberries, caster sugar, ginger and elderflower in a saucepan with 4 tbsp water and cook, covered, for 5 mins until the berries begin to pop. Tip into a baking dish.
2 Make the topping. Sift the flour, baking powder and a pinch of salt into a mixing bowl. Rub in the butter until the mixture looks like breadcrumbs, then stir in the caster sugar. Mix in the buttermilk to give a soft, sticky dough. Dollop spoonfuls on top of the gooseberries, then sprinkle with the demerara. Bake for 25 mins or until golden brown and crusty. Stand for 5 mins. Good served with some low-fat ice cream, fromage frais or custard.

PER SERVING 255 kcals • protein 5g • carbs 53g • fat 4g • sat fat 2g • fibre 4g • sugar 34g • salt 0.52g GF

Health benefits Gooseberries are one of the few fruits that retain much of their vitamin C levels when cooked. They also contain tannins, which help to protect against cancer and improve the immune system.

Vegan & delicious

These simple bakes are suitable for vegans, or anyone who can't eat dairy – but everyone will love them! Recipes KERRY HEMMS Photographs SAM STOWELL

Vegan rhubarb & custard bake

CUTS INTO 15 squares **PREP** 20 mins plus **cooling**
COOK 1 hr 15 mins EASY

250g rhubarb, cut into 1in lengths
275g golden caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla bean paste
250g vegan margarine, plus extra for greasing
2 tbsp ground flaxseed
150g soya custard, plus extra to serve (optional)



250g self-raising flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp vanilla extract
130g unsweetened apple sauce
Icing sugar, to serve (optional)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan and put the rhubarb in a roasting tin. Sprinkle over 25g of the caster sugar, add the vanilla bean paste, give the tin a shake and put it in the oven for 15 mins. Remove, pour away any liquid from the tin and leave the rhubarb to cool.
2 Reduce oven to 170C/150C fan. Grease and line a 25 x 20cm cake tin with baking parchment. In a small bowl, mix the flaxseed with 6 tbsp water and set aside for 5 mins.
3 In a bowl, beat together the margarine, 100g of the custard, the flour, baking powder, vanilla extract and remaining sugar. Once this is well combined, light and fluffy, add the apple sauce and flaxseed mixture.
4 Put a third of the mixture in the tin and top with a third of the rhubarb. Repeat twice more, then dot teaspoons of the remaining custard on top.
5 Bake in the oven for 45 mins, then cover with foil and bake for a further 30 mins or until golden brown and a skewer comes out clean when inserted in the middle. Serve warm as a pudding with soya custard, if you like. Or allow to cool completely, then sprinkle with icing sugar and enjoy as a cake. *Eat the same day.*

PER SQUARE 274 kcals • protein 2g • carbs 34g • fat 15g • sat fat 3g • fibre 2g • sugar 21g • salt 0.3g

INDULGENT TREAT
FOR EVERYONE



Vegan banana & peanut butter cupcakes

MAKES 16 **PREP** 25 mins **COOK** 20 mins
EASY

240g self-raising flour
140g golden caster sugar
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
240g egg-free mayonnaise
2 large or 3 small ripe bananas, mashed
1 tsp vanilla extract
25g vegan dark chocolate chips
FOR THE ICING
80g vegan margarine
250g icing sugar
25ml vegan milk (we used almond milk)
2 tbsp smooth peanut butter

1 Heat oven to 170C/150C fan. Line muffin tins with 16 cases. In a bowl, combine the flour, sugar, ½ tsp salt and bicarbonate of soda. In a second bowl or a jug, mix the mayonnaise, mashed bananas and vanilla extract. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and mix with a spoon until just combined (don't overmix or your cupcakes will be heavy). Spoon the mixture into the cases and bake for 20 mins.
2 When the cupcakes come out of the oven, sprinkle the chocolate chips over – they will melt and then harden again, so don't touch.
3 For the icing, combine the vegan margarine and icing sugar in an electric mixer, then add the vegan milk and continue to mix on a slow speed until completely combined. Turn the mixer up and combine for a further 3 mins. Finally, stir in the peanut butter. Pipe or simply spread the icing on top of the cakes. *Store in an airtight container and eat within 2 days.*

PER CUPCAKE 295 kcals • protein 2g • carbs 40g • fat 14g • sat fat 3g • fibre 1g, sugar 28g • salt 0.7g

Food styling KATY GREENWOOD | Styling POLLY WEBB-WILSON

Vegan cherry & almond brownies

MAKES 12 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 45 mins

EASY

80g vegan margarine, plus extra for greasing
2 tbsp ground flaxseed
120g dark chocolate
½ tsp coffee granules
125g self-raising flour
70g ground almonds
50g cocoa powder
¼ tsp baking powder
250g golden caster sugar
1½ tsp vanilla extract
70g glacè cherries (rinsed and halved)

1 Heat oven to 170C/150C fan. Grease and line a 20cm square tin with baking parchment. Combine the flaxseed with 6 tbsp water and set aside for at least 5 mins.
2 In a saucepan, melt the chocolate, coffee and margarine with 60ml water on a low heat. Allow to cool slightly.
3 Put the flour, almonds, cocoa, baking powder and ¼ tsp salt in a bowl and stir to remove any lumps. Using a hand whisk, mix the sugar into the melted chocolate mixture, and beat well until smooth and glossy, ensuring all the sugar is well dissolved. Stir in the flaxseed mixture and vanilla extract, the cherries and then the flour mixture. It will now be very thick. Stir until combined and spoon into the prepared tin. Bake for 35-45 mins until a skewer inserted in the middle comes out clean with moist crumbs. Allow to cool in the tin completely, then cut into squares. *Store in an airtight container and eat within 3 days.*

PER BROWNIE 296 kcals • protein 4g • carbs 36g • fat 15g • sat fat 5g • fibre 3g • sugar 27g • salt 0.2g GF

Buying vegan

Use dairy-free sunflower spread for baking, and pure dairy-free olive oil spread for spreading on toast or sandwiches. Both oat milk and almond milk work well in baking – just make sure that it's unsweetened.

The best way to replace eggs

There are many ways to replace eggs when baking, without resorting to a commercially produced 'egg replacer'. You can use mashed banana, apple sauce, vegan mayonnaise, flaxseed or chia sees to add moisture and texture. Flaxseed and chia seeds are the more unusual one - when mixed with water and left to stand for at least 5 mins, it goes gloopy, which gives your bakes a nice bouncy texture, as well as adding extra nutrients.





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- **REIF BIN OTHMAN** – Zuma

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- **CLAYPOT,** City Max Hotels Bur Dubai
- **THE BOMBAY,** Marco Polo Hotel
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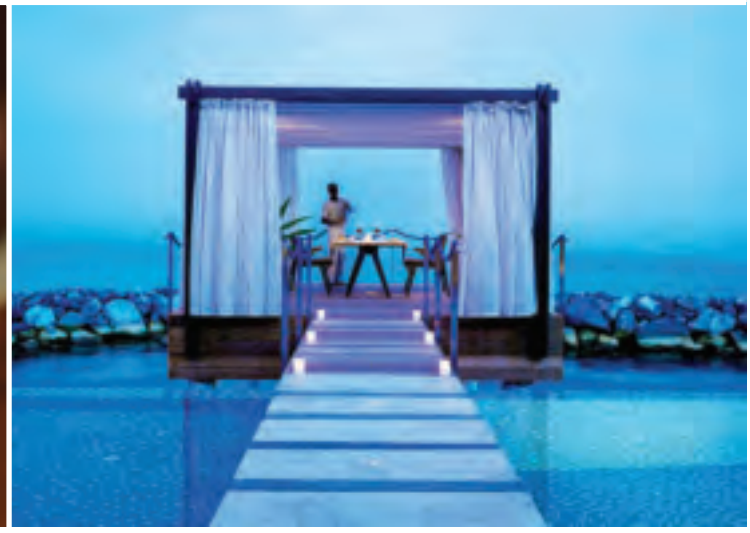
Gourmet Lifestyle

Travel, global cuisines, health, interviews, kitchens and more









IN THIS SECTION

✳ UAE's Instagram stars tell us where we should be eating next, **P71** ✳ Inside London-based chef Anissa Helou's kitchen and home office, **P72** ✳ We catch up with Mexico's biggest chef export, Richard Sandoval, **P74** ✳ Where to go for a wellness break, **P78**

How to go GLUTEN-FREE

Nutritional therapist Kerry Torrens explains how to cook and eat well without gluten.

Found in grains including wheat, rye, barley and spelt, gluten is a protein that gives breads and bakes their light and chewy quality.

Anyone who has been diagnosed with coeliac disease must cut out gluten from their diet, or it will damage the lining of the gut, preventing it from working effectively. Other staple foods that are off limits include pasta and couscous. It's estimated that one in 100 people has coeliac disease, and that many others may be affected but have not been diagnosed. An even larger percentage of people are simply intolerant to gluten, which means, while it doesn't elicit an allergic reaction, gluten still affects the digestive process, causing discomfort, and symptoms ranging from IBS to sniffles.

For the home cook, the biggest challenge of gluten-free cooking is baking, as gluten affects the texture of cakes and bread. You can either follow gluten-free recipes or adapt conventional ones. When it comes to most meals, adapting a gluten-free diet is easier, with simple swaps.

Choosing the right substitutes

What to avoid	What to use instead
Wheat flour and foods made with it: biscuits, bread, cakes, pasta, pastry, pizza, some breakfast cereals	Shop-bought flours that are labelled 'gluten-free', or naturally gluten-free flours, such as buckwheat, millet, potato, rice or soya. Also, gluten-free corn pasta and rice noodles, as well as biscuits, breads and cakes that are labelled 'gluten-free'.
Oats, including oat-based cereals and porridge	Oats that are labelled 'gluten-free'. Oats themselves don't contain gluten but may be contaminated during the milling process. Some coeliacs can tolerate uncontaminated gluten-free oats. If you've not eaten oats for some time, speak with your dietitian before reintroducing them into your diet.
Barley, bulghar wheat, couscous, semolina	Naturally gluten-free options such as polenta, quinoa, rice and tapioca.
Foods that contain cereal: sausages, stuffings, items coated in breadcrumbs	Gluten-free alternatives or, if homemade, use naturally gluten-free options like polenta instead of breadcrumbs.
Foods thickened with flour: gravies, certain mustards, sauces, stocks	Thicken sauces with cornflour, use mustard powder and select gluten-free alternatives for gravy and stocks.
Brewed or fermented foods, including soy sauce, ale, beer, lager and stout	Wheat-free tamari (you can find them at the Organic Foods & Café) is a good alternative to soy sauce. Replace beers and lagers with cider, spirits and wine.

What to look for on the label

If you're buying packaged foods, check for one of the following to ensure that the product is safe for a coeliac to eat. Remember, some unlikely foods can contain gluten, including soy sauce crisps, flavoured yoghurts, ice cream and confectionery.

- ✓ Product is labelled gluten free or free from gluten.
- ✓ Pack is labelled suitable for coeliacs.
- ✓ There is no gluten listed in the ingredients.

Your gluten-free storecupboard

Cooking for a coeliac? Remember that plenty of regular storecupboard foods are naturally gluten free, such as:

- **All types of rice and rice flour.**
- **Baking ingredients** Arrowroot, bicarbonate of soda, cornflour, cream of tartar, food colouring, gelatine, icing sugar, molasses, polenta, potato and buckwheat flours, sugar, yeast.
- **Beans and pulses** Chickpeas, lentils.
- **Fats and oils** Butter, ghee, lard, low-fat spreads, oils.
- **Hot drinks** Cocoa, coffee, tea.
- **Plain nuts and seeds.**
- **Preserves** Fruit conserves, golden syrup, honey, jam, marmalade, sweet jelly, treacle.
- **Sauces and seasonings** Garlic and tomato purées, mustard powder, savoury jellies (such as mint and cranberry), vinegars including barley malt vinegar, Worcestershire sauce.
- **Snacks** Homemade popcorn, plain rice cakes and rice crackers.

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BBC goodfood Middle East

Insta-stars' foodie finds for the year ahead

Instagram is the social media platform of choice for a handful of Emirati foodies who have been inspiring us with their posts. Here's a sneak peek into five local foodies' favourite hidden gems, and their recommendations for hot new places to eat at!



Saeed Zamzam
@Saeedeats

Saeed Zamzam is based in Sharjah, and through his account, he focuses on educating people about food, from a younger and more positive perspective. He showcases his latest dining adventures with photos and text on his thoughts on the dining experience.

Must-try spots: SlapFish in Ibn Battuta mall is great for the clam chowder, chowder fries and lobster roll. Coya, the establishment from London which offers modern Peruvian cuisine, just opened at the new Four Seasons Dubai last month, and I think that will be one to watch out for!

Like Comment

Shaikha Al Ali and Reem Al Awadhi
@Khashooga

The duo behind this Instragram account are huge fans of street food. They wander through Karama, Satwa, Bur Dubai and Deira to search for hole-in-the-wall restaurants, where they film short, vibrant documentary-style videos.

Must-try spots: A rustic kebab shop called Freej Kebab in Al Twar, which serves piping hot juicy kebabs with freshly baked bread. Afghan Khorasan Kebab is another one of our favorites, which offer tender, melt-in-your-mouth beef dishes, served with fresh Afghani bread. Afghani spices are used in all their dishes, and these flavours are new to us and incredibly beautiful.

Like Comment

Abdulla Saeed Al Shaikh
@Abdulla_Eats

The Al-Ain based foodie finds himself in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, trying out the latest hotspots whenever he isn't working. Abdulla shares his discoveries and interacts with other foodies in the region to get their opinions and suggestions for places to visit as well.

Must-try spots: There's a café called Café Rider in Umm Suqueim which serves the finest coffee creations in the UAE – they have a barista champion who will be taking part in the World Barista Championship! Another great place is Wingsters, in Dubai Marina, as they have a big selection of sauces to complement wings, and customisable burgers.

Like Comment

Yasmine Omari
@DeliciousDubai

Yasmine lives by George Bernard Shaw's quote, "There is no sincerer love than the love of food", as she believes it sums her down to a tee! The purpose of her Instagram account is to convey that eating well isn't just about fine dining – although she does enjoy that too!

Must-try spot: I recently discovered Origami next to the souk at Fisherman's harbor, near the Dubai Offshore Sailing club, and I absolutely love this Japanese fusion restaurant. It has the best tuna pizza with shiitake mushrooms and black truffle oil. The Korean bibimbap is a firm favourite too!

Like Comment

Hessa Khalifa Al Khalifa
@hkfinds

Hessa's food hunts comprise of restaurants in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, London, and Bahrain (she's half Bahraini). She's always had a passion for food and photography, which comes through in her posts.

Must-try spots: Cali Burger in Jumeirah is a new restaurant offering fries in melted cheese, grilled sweet onions and sauce. Clé Dubai is great for frog legs, while Raju Omlet in Karama is perfect for the spinach omelette with green chilli sauce. Head to Global Village for the food kiosks, offering waffles, churros and what not – some are absolute gems. In Abu Dhabi, try 57 boutique café's lavender ice Earl grey tea with honey (located in the Bateen harbour area).

Like Comment

Text: NICOLA MONTEATH



Anissa's loft kitchen is streamlined and practical

MY KITCHEN

Anissa Helou

The Middle Eastern food expert tells Vanessa Berridge how she transformed a loft into a stunning kitchen and office space.

Photographs GEOFF WILKINSON

Chef, food writer and teacher, Anissa Helou left her native Lebanon, aged 21, to study interior design in London. She then worked in antiques and art consultancy in London, Paris and the Middle East for 20 years before publishing her first cookbook in 1994, Lebanese Cuisine (Grub Street), which was shortlisted for the André Simon book awards. Her latest is Levant: Recipes and Memories from the Middle East (Harper Collins). Anissa is currently working as the menu adviser for Koshari Street – an Egyptian street-food café, which opened in central London last summer (kosharistreet.com).

You use this space for work – how did you plan it?

I integrated all the appliances and moved the kitchen – so that it wouldn't be the first thing you see as you come up the stairs, as I didn't want the room immediately to look like a kitchen. This was as much for me (when I'm not cooking) as for my guests. The sun streams into this room and, fortunately, the kitchen is in the least sunny place.

Who designed your kitchen?

I did, with David Cook, of Bluebase Architects, assisted by a talented young architect, Akiko Kobayashi. Both were in tune with what I was trying to achieve and, between us, we created my dream kitchen. David also designed Koshari Street.

What were your essentials?

I needed plenty of preparation space for recipe testing and demonstrations. My previous kitchen was crowded, with beautiful and delicate objects, so here I wanted nothing to interfere with my cooking. It was a conscious decision to have less storage space – both for aesthetics and to stop me stocking up on unnecessary ingredients. Unfortunately, it didn't make any difference, because I still have many ingredients I don't use!

I chose all my equipment carefully, for quality, ease of use and keeping clean. And I picked Bosch appliances because they're quiet and efficient.

How did you choose the flooring and worktops?

The wooden floors were here already, and were stained and sealed with a strong matt sealant. I love the way the sandblasted glass splashback protects the brick wall but also shows it off. The stainless-steel worktops are a pain to keep spotless, but they're practical and look marvellous.

And the lighting?

The architect used cool lights under the cupboards, so that I don't have to worry about the



The kitchen opens onto the dining area, which is spacious and ideal for informal weekend entertaining



Anissa bought the nest of non-stick baking pans in Italy



'I love my Bjorn Dahlstrom cooking pots, which cook beautifully and look gorgeous,' says Anissa

ANISSA'S TIPS

- Ensure you have plenty of prep space, so that you're not crowded when cooking.
- If possible, have the counters wider than the regular 600mm to give space for storage and worktop appliances.
- Put the hob on one side, rather than in the middle of an island.
- Integrate fridges, dishwashers and other such appliances, for smart, neat lines.
- Use veg and fruit leftovers as compost, if you have a garden.

food getting hot on the worktop – although I do need better lighting at night.

What do you like best?

I am very happy that the kitchen is both functional and beautiful. The light in the room is lovely and is perfect for relaxed Sunday lunches, which often start late and go on until the evening.

Is there anything you'd do differently?

I would have all four burners induction (rather than two of them halogen). I'd move the oven nearer to the burners and not have the built-in bain marie, which I've never used. Also, I'd have double, rather than individual, cupboards underneath the counter, and I'd add more refrigeration and freezer space.

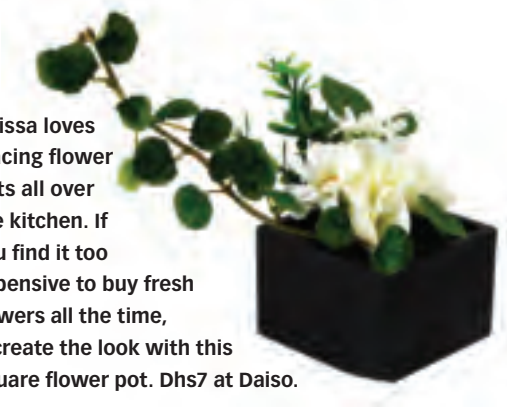
GET THE LOOK

This Alessi Kettle with bird shaped whistle adds instant style. Dhs580 at Tavola.





These Deli Jars are perfect for storing spices, cookies and pasta. Dhs15 each at Harvest Home.



Anissa loves placing flower pots all over the kitchen. If you find it too expensive to buy fresh flowers all the time, recreate the look with this Square flower pot. Dhs7 at Daiso.



Add a pop of colour to your dining table, as Anissa has done, with this modern Curran Chair in red. Dhs1,199 at Crate and Barrel.



The Mexican maestro

One of the key drivers of modern Mexican cuisine, chef Richard Sandoval grew up as the son of an expert restaurateur and an extended family of food lovers – surrounded by his grandmother's authentic recipes. Now, with almost three dozen restaurants worldwide, he's opened his third in Dubai, Zengo, a Mexican-Singaporean fusion concept, and is still raring to go, Dave Reeder finds.

As a child in Mexico City, Richard Sandoval joined his grandmother in the kitchen and then gathered around her large table with family to enjoy lively Mexican feasts prepared from scratch. What did he learn at her side?

To respect fresh, authentic, ingredients and how to mix the vibrant flavours that turned everyday family dinners into celebrated events. Combined with his father's restaurant skills gave him critical lessons in service and restaurant management.

However, being a chef was not his first career choice. Instead, he hoped to become a professional tennis star until a tough stint on the European circuit made him decide to turn "to what I really enjoyed: cooking". He enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America and before too long opened two contemporary French restaurants in New York. However, the call of his childhood drove him to

Photos ANAS CHERUR; SUPPLIED

open, in 1997, his flagship modern Mexican restaurant Maya in the city. His career and culinary empire took off and, in rapid succession, he became a consultant, a TV chef, cookbook author and a brand ambassador. Along the way he assembled a leading global restaurant group.

Although he is still firmly rooted in his beloved Mexican cuisines, he also enjoys combining Mexican flavours and ingredients with those of other cultures, along the way creating new and unexpected concepts and cuisines such as modern and coastal Mexican, Latin-Asian, and Pan-Latin.

The chef who describes his culinary philosophy as being all about 'balance, taste and texture' was in Dubai recently to open his latest venture, Zengo. He chatted to us about his new restaurant, Mexican cuisine, and why, after all these years, food continues to excite him.

Back again – it seems like you can't stay away from Dubai!
I think this is the most exciting city in the world. I was one of the very first big name chefs to set up here and I don't see an end to growth.

You're opening your third restaurant here. Do you think there's room for more?
I hope so! To be honest, this restaurant was the hotel's idea – they'd seen my other Zengos and thought the idea would work here. It's Asian-meets-Latin American with Chef Akmal Anuar, who I met in Singapore when he was head chef of Iggy's. We hit it off straight away and it's been very interesting and inspiring developing the menu with him.

"I think the way the industry is going is that people will go to a fine dining place maybe once a month, but increasingly they'll want lifestyle restaurants – still good food but more relaxed!"

As you aren't based in the same place, how have you been working together to develop the concepts?
We've been meeting up as often as we can. When that happens, he would show me things, I would show him others and we'd develop ideas together. He's a very intuitive chef and we haven't any borders between us. The menu is very ingredient driven and we'll have some products unique to us – certain chillies, for example. I think we've both learned a lot. Personally, I've no ego in the kitchen – it's all about the food and, as people travel more and more, they'll get the idea of the mix.

Do you find it depressing that Mexican food is largely misunderstood outside of the country?
I do find it is misunderstood. It was even worse 20 years ago but everyone still thinks Tex-Mex is what our cuisine is all about – tacos and burritos. I am very excited now that Mexican cuisine is having a re-birth, it's great to see people appreciate the diversity of our cuisine and really being exposed to all the different chiles, and wonderful ingredients Mexico has to offer; now, they are seeing the real deal!

Are there a lot of regional variations in the cuisine?
I believe Mexican cooking is more land- and sea-driven than regional, even though every area has ingredients indigenous to it. I think in all the coasts you find great ceviches, ague chiles, grilled whole fish marinated in adobos and dried chiles, sea food tacos, also great tamales stuffed with seafood and the famous sea food tacos. Inland, you find great moles with wild game, amazing tamales stuffed with pork or chicken or wild mushrooms, great pipians [a Mexican sauce] and stews, and many other tacos, tortas and so on.

So what excites you about the cuisine?
Mexican food is incredibly diverse and regional and you really need to understand the ingredients and how to use them. My passion is still to create dishes that people understand. We have an amazing cuisine – it deserves more attention. I think I've done a fair bit to help bring it up-to-date as have other chefs like Rick Bayliss, but we're just showcasing the cuisine in a new way. Mexico is still a poor country.

How exactly do you define modern Mexican cuisine?
Modern Mexican, I like to define as old ways in new hands – I have taken traditional recipes that I grew up eating at my grandmother's house, and combined them with modern cooking techniques. Also, I have cut out lard as it was very commonly used, but is unhealthy, and I have also modernised the presentation to make the food more appealing.

From tennis to cooking, has the journey been fulfilling?
When I first started, when I was cooking every day, I got the same adrenaline rush that I would get playing a tennis match as being on the line and things were just clicking. For me, it was the same rush as being in a tennis match.

When do you think you'll stop opening new restaurants?
I don't know! I love new experiences and I'm not a cookie cutter kind of guy. At the moment I'm looking forward to opening Toro Toro Doha, and five more restaurants in Chicago, D.C and Mexico. I think the way the industry is going is that people will go to a fine dining place maybe once a month, but increasingly they'll want lifestyle restaurants – still good food but more relaxed.

That certainly seems to be the trend…
Virtually all the top chefs now have casual places, they're affordable but, crucially, more approachable. Remember, spending 200 dollars on a meal is not for everyone. I love food but I also like to take off with the kids to a beach or the mountains and just relax. Maybe I should open a shrimp shack!

Or a food truck perhaps? Do you think the food truck concept will work here? We've just had a number of them licensed to operate on a roaming basis.
It's certainly a great way for younger chefs to get a start and take ownership. The problem is, from a restaurateur's perspective, that they can really hurt our business. Look at the investment we put into a restaurant and then, bang!, out of nowhere ten food trucks are parked across the street. Somehow we need a level playing field. Sure, we can do a steak sandwich and a drink for ten bucks just like they do but that doesn't cover our investment.

What's your take on the Dubai restaurant scene at present?
The city has certainly changed dramatically but I think it needs, in food terms, to develop its own identity. Now it's just importing expensive produce for absentee chefs...

What's the main lesson you've learned in life?
I don't remember who originally told me this, but it was 'to stay humble'. It's important to keep yourself grounded. In many ways, I'm still the same person today that I was 17 years ago when I first started in this business. I like to get to know the dishwashers, bartenders and cooks in all my restaurants. Those connections have helped me stay grounded; they help me keep learning. Once I stop learning, that's my last day in the industry. >>

SIGNATURE RECIPES



Calamar Azteca

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins **COOK** 10 mins EASY

800g squid, cleaned and cut into small pieces
150g Chinese cabbage, shredded
100g red cabbage, shredded
500g chile ancho flour mix
50ml lime juice
10g garlic, chopped
5g cilantro, chopped
Sea salt, to taste
1 orange, cut into wedges
FOR CHILE ANCHO FLOUR MIX
400g all-purpose flour
60g of chilli ancho powder (or any other chilli powder)
40g paprika
Sea salt, to taste
FOR BLOOD ORANGE REDUCTION
500g blood orange purée
50g chipotle purée
100g lemon juice
Sea salt, to taste

1 Make the chile ancho flour by combining the ingredients together in a mixing bowl, until everything is well combined.
2 To make the blood orange reduction, put all the ingredients together in a pan, bring to the boil and cook until you reduce the mix by half.
3 In a mixing bowl, place 500g of the chilli ancho flour, add the cut squid and coat really well. Fry the squid in a small pan or deep fryer until it reaches a golden brown colour.
4 In another mixing bowl, place the shredded cabbage (both) along with the cilantro, chopped garlic, and lime juice, and season with salt.
5 To serve, put the shredded cabbage mix on a plate as a bed, place the fried squid on top, and garnish with the red blood orange reduction and the orange wedges.



Churros

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 8-10 mins EASY

400ml water
100ml milk
300g flour
4 eggs
5g salt
150g sugar
100g unsalted butter
10g cinnamon powder, for garnish
Chocolate-hazelnut ice cream, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the water, milk, salt, 100g sugar, and butter in a pan – be careful not to boil the mixture.
2 In a mixing bowl, combine the flour with the milk and water mix, until it is well mixed. Add the eggs and mix. Leave the mixture to cool down.
3 Put the dough into a piping bag, and pipe long narrow strips into a deep-fryer or pan with hot oil. Fry until they turn golden brown.
4 Dust the churros with remaining sugar and cinnamon powder and serve with chocolate-hazelnut ice cream, if you like.

Taste of the world

All the foodie news from around the globe.



Haute cuisine in the Maldives

The luxe Cheval Blanc Randheli resort in Maldives has recently revamped all its culinary offerings, to offer a range of options, from relaxed feet-in-the-sand-style daytime dining, to degustation dinners. White restaurant offers salads, sandwiches as well as traditional Maldivian curries; The Deelani is a Mediterranean-style over-water restaurant, offering everything from tapas to mezze; Diptyque offers Asian specialties; while the signature Le 1947 restaurant offers ultra-fine dining in an elegant, romantic setting. The LVMH-stamped luxury trappings of the resort and Maldivian island perfection will seem just like bonuses! Room rates start from US$1300 (around Dhs4,770), visit randheli.chevalblanc.com.

HOT NEW SPOT



Raffles Istanbul, set by the Bosphorus, is the newest address to check into when in this vibrant city – not least for its signature Spanish restaurant helmed by Michelin-starred chef Sergi Arola. A former colleague of Ferran Adria, Arola, who has restaurants everywhere from Santiago to Mumbai, serves up traditional Catalonian cuisine using innovative techniques in a sharing-style menu, featuring dishes like salt cod, and his signature potatoes 'bravas' given a unique twist. More details on www.raffles.com/istanbul.

Text SUDESHNA GHOSH | Photograps SUPPLIED

AIRLINE FOOD – UPGRADED!

Even as airlines pull out all stops to improve their culinary offerings, all too often, their efforts are focused on premium cabins alone. Qantas is set to change all that with their brand new service for economy passengers in all their international flights, featuring larger portions and more choices – including a healthy option, a comfort food option, and at least one route-inspired option (think Smoky Barbeque Beef on US flights, and Tahini Barramundi with preserved lemon couscous and chickpeas on Dubai flights). Along with the introduction of their Select on Q Eat service (where passengers get to choose their meals online before the flight), new serve-ware, signature welcome drinks, and an additional range of self-serve snack options, the Australian airline has definitely raised the bar when it comes to in-flight dining, in one fell swoop! Visit www.qantas.com for more.



Fujairah for foodies

A Fujairah weekend just got a bit more gourmet, with the new menu at the beachfront Grand Bleu restaurant at Radisson Blu resort, Fujairah. Expect everything from fresh, homemade breads and gourmet burgers to steaks, seafood and desserts on offer, whether dining for lunch or dinner, with the crashing waves, and blue (or starlit) skies providing all the atmosphere you need! Call 09-2449700.

16

The number of Michelin stars held by the Mandarin Oriental Group restaurants in the 2015 guide. The largest haul for any hotel group, the stars have been awarded to 11 restaurants across Europe and Asia.

Destination: Wellness

Whether you want to focus on detoxification, fitness, or relaxation, this New Year, book yourself in for a getaway where nutrition combines with wellbeing to give your body and soul a new lease of life. By Jessica Hudson.



NATURAL HEALING

at Alila Villas Soori, Bali

If you love surrounding yourself with nature, and immersing yourself in the local culture, this private and luxurious retreat is the perfect wellness hideaway for your New Year's wish list. The all-villa resort is located along the southwest coast of Bali, between UNESCO world heritage-protected rice fields and beautiful volcanic-sand beaches that overlook the Indian Ocean.

The award-winning Spa Alila focuses on putting a contemporary spin on ancient Asian healing techniques and age-old beauty recipes that feature fresh, natural ingredients. They have recently launched a range of 'Relaxology' packages combining soothing and detoxifiying Balinese treatments using locally sourced ingredients, including the volcanic island sand itself (such as a high pressure warm water massage using detoxifying volcanic sand body exfoliator and rice milk and rice bran lotions to help with blood circulation and boost the body's immune system), with new spa menus incorporating raw food options, daily yoga and a range of cultural experiences.

Their newly created raw food menu includes dishes such as scallop ceviche with bumbu kuning lime, coconut and chilli and green mango salad, as well as sweet treats like granita, coconut jelly and pina colada sorbet. The wellness offerings are combined with new cultural journeys that enable guests to draw upon the spirituality of the land. Whether it's learning to make terracotta earthenware with a local Blacksmith, or mastering wayang style artwork or salt making, each experience will be totally submersive.

Need to know: Prices for one bedroom villas start from £365 (around Dhs2,090), visit www.alilahotels.com/soori.

Photos SUPPLIED



YOGIC REMEDIES

at Six Senses Zighy Bay, Oman

With just a two hours drive from Dubai across desert dunes and Hajjar mountains, you will find yourself transported into Zighy time, a far cry from fast paced city life. Six Senses Zighy Bay is an authentic Bedouin-style retreat on the northern coast of Oman, set on a sweeping white sand bay and lapped by the turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean. The sandy pathways and rustic décor, surrounded by dramatic mountain scenery and endless vistas out over the sea, are guaranteed to make you immediately feel at one with nature and the great outdoors.

Their new Yogic Detox retreat is truly the perfect way to kick off the New Year, offering a gentle but effective way to cleanse the body, combining hatha yoga postures with meditation, breathing exercises and a detox diet plan specially designed by nutritionist Jason Vale featuring fresh juices, vegetable soups and delicious salads. The retreat includes a personalised yoga consultation and classes, guided meditations, massages and other spa treatments (their Basil and Mint Scrub, Ayurveda Aromatherapy facial using Mogra, Saffron and Rose, and Aloe Vera Ice Hammam using aloe vera grown in their own organic garden, are fabulous), plus reiki, yogic intestinal cleanse and detoxifying therapies. All this will be complemented by a detoxifying menu – think squash soup, avocado and tofu salad, courgette and dill soup, tuna salad – to make for a completely holistic getaway.

Need to know: Prices for the Yogic Retreat start from US$1,140 per person for five nights (7-, 10-, and 14-night retreats are also available). Visit www.sixsenses.com.

WELLBEING IN THE WILD

at Karkloof Safari Spa, South Africa

For a destination spa with a difference, Karkloof Safari Spa is the ultimate wellness and wildlife retreat, located in the rolling hills of Kwa-Zulu Natal on South Africa's east coast, near Durban. Heralded as the best spa retreat in Africa, Karkloof is set within a 3,500 hectare private game reserve, where spa aficionados can enjoy fantastic facilities and unique Thai-inspired treatments, while witnessing rhino, buffalo, leopard, hippos, and plenty of other wildlife in their natural habitat.

A boutique luxury lodge with just 16 villas, the service here is very personalised, and guests can choose to enjoy meals, safari activities and treatments at any time of the day and night. With a focus on healthy, nourishing cuisine and creative raw food menus which change daily, all the food is made using organic locally sourced ingredients, with plenty of gluten-free and vegan options.

An array of activities, including hikes up to the Karkloof falls nearby are on offer, but if you want to keep the focus firmly on a body overhaul, then their Detox Retreat is just the thing. Specifically designed to help cleanse the liver, kidneys and intestinal tract of impurities and toxins (just what the doctor ordered after the festive excesses!), and leave you feeling glowing and energised, the retreat includes a tailor-made programme of dietary advice, spa treatments, fitness activities and emotional therapies is created individually for each guest. Detoxifying treatments include lymphatic drainage full body massages; detoxifying regeneration facials; herbal baths with epsom salts, fresh ginger and kaffir lime leaves, which are combined with activities such as yoga detox drainage, tai chi body balancing and wildlife cycling sessions. Alongside the cleansing and detoxifying diet planned in consultation with the spa director and head chef, the various therapies you will be swanning in and out of, which focus on both the physical and mental condition, and the stunning setting, a few days here is sure to leave you rejuvenated in ways you hadn't thought possible.

Need to know: Detox Retreats are offered in three-, five, and seven-night packages, prices from 10,900ZAR (around Dhs3,520) per person including all meals, game drives, guided hikes and unlimited spa treatments. www.karkloofsafarispa.com. >>













ISLAND RELAXATION

at Velaa Private Island, Maldives

Think of the Maldives and you think of powder white beaches, and a fly-and-flop holiday with not much else but sunbathing and snorkelling to fill your days. But Velaa, this year's hottest new opening in the Indian Ocean, and a must-visit on any spa fan's radar, is set to change all that. Owned by a Czech Billionaire, who, having tried and tested all the leading resorts in the Maldives, decided to design his own dream castaway island and create the ultimate Maldivian experience, the resort has a firm focus on wellness.

Executive Chef Ghuashan De Silva has created an exquisite and innovative raw cuisine wellness menu, with organic ingredients sourced from local islands. Bringing together a creative blend of south East Asian flavours with wellness principles, all the food is created using 100 per cent organic produce. The small and daily-changing menus promote the Maldivian 'locavore' concept, to highlight fresh ingredients and natural cooking methods – such as sprouting, dehydration, fermentation and maceration – to retain maximum nutrients, with a singular aim to get their guests to eat healthier and feel better.

Combined with the My Blends by Clarins Spa, a stunning relaxation zone, the island is the perfect destination for a few days of inside-out beautification. Designed with glass panelled flooring for guests to enjoy the exotic fish swimming below while having a tailor-made treatment, the spa is also home to Maldives' first 'snow room', excellent for improving skin tone and circulation, and the unique Cloud 9 experience – cloud-shaped reclining treatment pods which slowly sway and cradle you, accompanied by soothing music and colour therapy, to lull you into complete relaxation. A world class gym and yoga pavilion complete the mix.

For significant others who are looking for a different kind of holiday, or even if you want to mix it up a bit, there's plenty on offer at the island – from covered tennis and squash courts, and a mountain climbing wall, to a football field, and the only Troon short game Golf Academy in the Maldives. Plus of course, there are jet skis, sea-bobs, kite surfs and every water sport you can imagine, as well as expeditions in a semi-submarine to explore the magical underwater world, to choose from. And on days when you feel like you deserve a treat, Velaa's signature restaurant, Aragu, offers a menu designed by Michelin-star chef Adeline Grattard from Paris!

Need to know: Prices for Beach Pool Villas start from US$1,500 per night (Dhs5,510), visit www.velaaprivatelisland.com.

FITNESS FUN **in Zanzibar**

If this is the year you decide to really decide to go the my-body-is-a-temple route, then sign up for an award-winning retreat from Wild Fitness. Billed as 'transformative fitness holidays', these retreats are designed to rebuild the body's athleticism and strength using the natural environment, healthy food, and plenty of rest.

In the picturesque island setting of Zanzibar, you can find yourself sprinting on the beach, swimming in the ocean, running through jungles, boxing in a coconut grove, crawling, hanging – basically drawing on the lifestyle of our hunter-gatherer ancestors, who were fit and agile with nature providing all the fitness resources they needed – guided by expert coaches. Accompanied by fresh, wholesome and nourishing meals, massages, and educational sessions including cooking classes and nutritional workshops, the retreat promises to unleash each person's physical potential, and take their fitness to never-before levels, while restoring mental and emotional balance too.

There is lots of time to chill as well, when you can enjoy the beautiful beaches of Chakwa Bay, wallow in the turquoise waters, or discover the delights of the ancient city of Stonetown, an exciting place to explore with its winding alleyways and rooftop cafes where you can watch the dhows sail by.

With scenic settings and comfortable and atmospheric boutique accommodation, their back-to-basics approach means the luxury element here lies not in fancy hotels or being pampered, but in things like sleeping under starry skies, and getting to truly reconnect with nature.

Need to know: Wildfitness retreats range from 3-day Energiser courses to 3½ week long retreats, prices start from £725 (around Dhs4,165). Several fixed-date courses for Zanzibar are planned throughout January, they also offer retreats in Kenya, Andalucia, Crete, and the Isle of Wight. Visit http://www.wildfitness.com for more information.

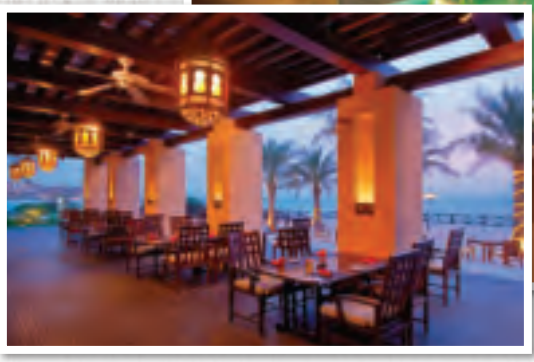


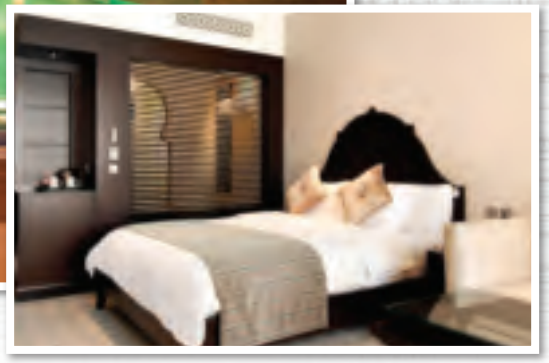
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A beach getaway worth over **Dhs9,000**







Dreaming off a weekend by the beach? Get a chance to win a two-night stay at Hilton Ras Al Khaimah Resort and Spa, inclusive of breakfast, dinner, and spa treatments.

Hilton Ras Al Khaimah Resort and Spa is the ultimate destination for relaxation and beachside bliss. With a 1.5 kilometre white sandy beach, seven pools – including two for children with slides – and a water sports centre for the adventurous who want to try scuba diving, parasailing, or banana boat rides, you'll never need to leave the resort, for a fun-filled weekend. When you want to fully rejuvenate, head to the spa which has nine treatment rooms, plus hammams, sauna and steam rooms.

The resort also boasts 14 restaurants and bars, including four specialty restaurants which offer everything from Asian, to Italian and Brazilian cuisines, so there's something to suit all tastes.

The winner gets to take their partner for a two-night stay in a Deluxe room, and can also enjoy daily breakfast, dinner for two at Pura Vida – where they can try the Brazilian churrasco experience – and a relaxing 60 minute spa treatment for two.

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to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

What is the name of the Brazilian restaurant at Hilton Ras Al Khaimah Resort and Spa?

*Terms & conditions apply. Flights are not included in this prize. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.



Who doesn't love popcorn?



The ceremonial Christmas tree lighting took place every evening



Looks like food trucks are here to stay!



The weather was perfect for a fun family weekend outdoors



Little ones loved the Snow Fight Zone

'Twas a jolly Christmas affair!

Carols were sung, Santa came around to meet little ones, fabulous food was enjoyed by all, and there was even snow falling. Here's a look back at the festive fun we had at the Dubai Christmas Festival last month.

The Dubai Christmas Festival which took place at the Dubai Media City Amphitheatre last month, was the biggest and best till date, and a fantastic fun-filled weekend destination for children. The Snow Fight zone was packed with children enjoying a bit of a white Christmas, while people shopped for everything from home décor to gift hampers, jewellery and pet food in the Market area. Everyone also sang along to Christmas carols played by the bands, while tucking into food from eateries like Book munch Café, the Gramercy, and French Bakery, to name just a few, as well as kiosks selling festive treats like chestnuts, mince pies, and mini Dutch pancakes. These pictures capture some of our favourite moments from the event.



Photographs ANAS CHERUR, JOHN MAGNO


The market had everything from handicrafts to stylish tableware on offer


It was the perfect Christmas shopping venue


The festive kiosks and stands added to the atmosphere


It was alfresco fun all the way for visitors!


Carol singing put everyone in the festive mood


Gingerbread house decorating was one of the many activities


There was snow in Dubai!


An old-school jukebox was a hit with the kids


The entertainment took on a festive hue too

We're here!





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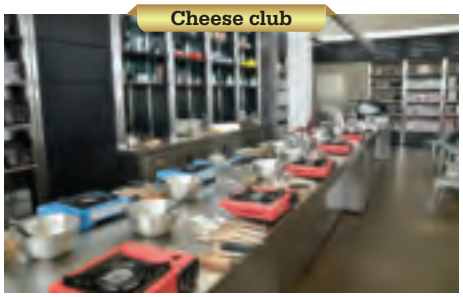
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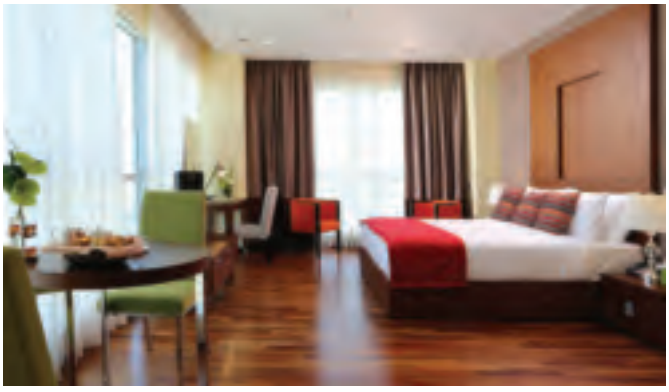
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Sign up now!

All you have to do is send an email to Rajeesh.nair@cpimediagroup.com or Marizel.salvador@cpimediagroup.com, and we'll sort you out. Once that's done, you will receive regular newsletters from us with unique promo codes that you can use to avail of the discounts.

Competitions

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to event passes, up for grabs.



WIN! A WEEKEND STAY AT RAMADA DOWNTOWN DUBAI, WORTH DHS1,500.

One lucky winner gets to take their partner to enjoy a one night stay at this new hotel in the Downtown area. Fitness buffs can visit the health club or enjoy the temperature-controlled outdoor pool, when not soaking in the myriad attractions of the Downtown area. The winner also get a lunch or dinner for two at Kenza, the all-day dining restaurant which serves everything from pizza to Arabic mixed grills.



WIN! BRUNCH FOR FOUR AT FLOOKA ABU DHABI, WORTH DHS1,500.

This restaurant at Eastern Mangroves Promenade, is the place to go to if you love seafood. One winner can take three friends along to the relaxed Saturday brunch which features a selection of seafood cooked to their liking. Sit indoors or out, and listen to tunes from the band while you indulge in classic food with a contemporary twist.



WIN! A JUICE CLEANSE PACKAGE FROM GO ORGANIC ME, WORTH DHS1,500.

Three lucky winners get to begin the New Year with the Signature Juice Cleanse, worth Dhs500 each, from the fruit and vegetable delivery service – Go Organic ME. All juices are made from local, organic fruit and vegetables, and are low in sugar, and low-GI too. Get ready to get rid of toxins, and revitalise your body over a five-day period, with six tasty, hydrating juice concoctions.

WIN! THE ENTERTAINER FINE DINING 2015 APP, WORTH OVER DHS1,180.

Three lucky winners can get their hands on this app, which helps you save over Dhs284,000 – thanks to the 800 buy-one-get-one free offers. Find deals from fine dining restaurants like Rivington Grill, Marco Pierre White, Trader Vics, and many more.





WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA, WORTH OVER DHS300.

Its Asian theme night at Mazina every Wednesday, and one winner gets to take a dining partner to the all-day dining restaurant to indulge. Choose from a selection of meat, chicken, seafood, and vegetables, and have it cooked to your liking – with your favourite sauce – right in front of you.

To stand a chance to win these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.

*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of CPI Media Group and entrants below 21 years old are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

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Soul **food**

In the first of a new series, in which we get the editor of one of our sister publications to ponder on a topic close to their hearts, Melanie Mingas tells us about her Dubai dining experiences.



Melanie Mingas, former editor of Hospitality Business Middle East magazine, looks back at her years in the UAE, and wonders what local flavours she is taking back with her?









When it comes to food, nobody does it like Dubai. When I arrived in the city four years ago, my first culinary experiences were played out at traditional Arabic restaurants in Jumeirah and Iftar meals in top hotels. As a newcomer, the scope of choice, and the literal size of the plates, was a culture in itself.

Although in those first months I did get to eat Pakistani cuisine outside packed diners on plastic chairs and fresh fish served from a shack behind Burj al Arab, the majority of my culinary encounters played out at tables in restaurants that could have been anywhere – from the bucket-list eateries, to the brunch buffets and the five-star banquets So often, the Arabic touch was entirely absent.

On my first holiday, I arrived home with tales of how pizza can be served by the metre and how dozens of outlets pride themselves on their recreation of the famous British fry-up. They were the obvious stories to tell. In cities like Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha, we are spoilt for choice when it comes to the top global brands serving our suppers, and the world class hospitality experiences those brands promise. But where is the soul in the offering?

My teenage summers were spent visiting family in Athens. To them, hospitality is food made with love. Handmade, from scratch, home-cooking, where every bite helped to create memories of the country, which I still hold dear today. Fifteen years later and with a single bite of true Greek produce, my heart can travel back to our evenings dining as a family on a terrace overlooking a bustling, ageless enigma of a city.

Now, as I prepare to leave Dubai after four years living and working in the emirate – two years of which were spent writing about hospitality – I seriously wonder which tastes could ever captivate me in the same way and how, if ever, taste could transport me back to a single day in my life here.

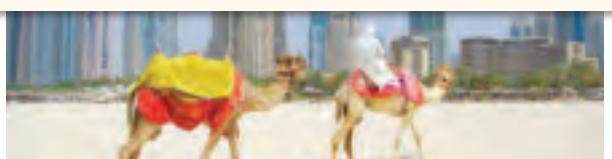
In this melting pot of influences and diverse environmental factors, I know such a thing is far from unlikely. But what has changed since 2010 is our collective appetite for that 'je ne sais quoi' that is simply soul.

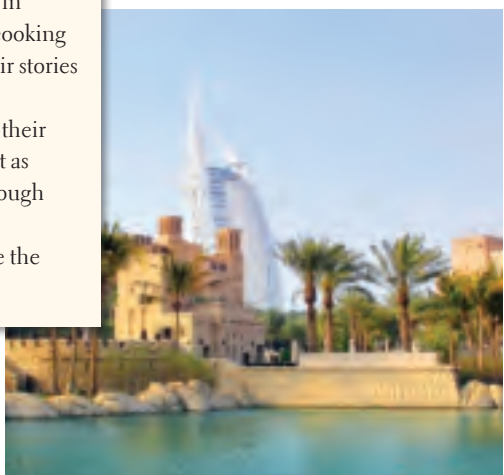
The market is maturing and today we see dozens of cafés and restaurants flooding the market with niche offerings for every mealtime. It has given a whole new dimension to the idea of hospitality. As a city, our first choice is no longer the chain restaurant with the same menus in Dubai and Dallas, but the entrepreneurial start-ups that bring somebody's mother's home cooking to a wider audience. Today there is a spirit in the city that is inspiring its people to share their stories through food...

It is not only the way to the resident's, or visitor's, or expatriate's heart, but also the way to their memory. In this city of sprawling tastes and tongues, instilling the local culture is as difficult as cultivating a shared culture. But our desire to create and share our individual narratives through taste, could be the key to weaving a legacy for future generations.

I can feel that steps are being taken in the right direction. But more needs to be done. Are the powers-that-be listening?

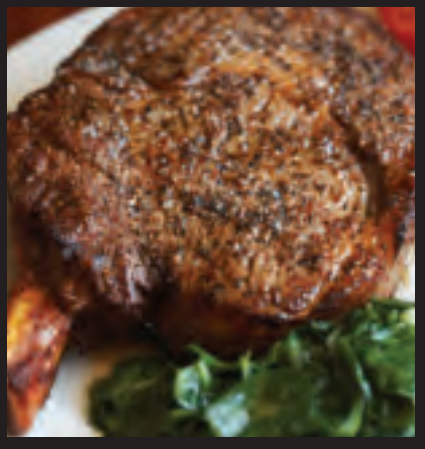






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